What Did Jesus Really Teach?

CHARLES M. SHELDON

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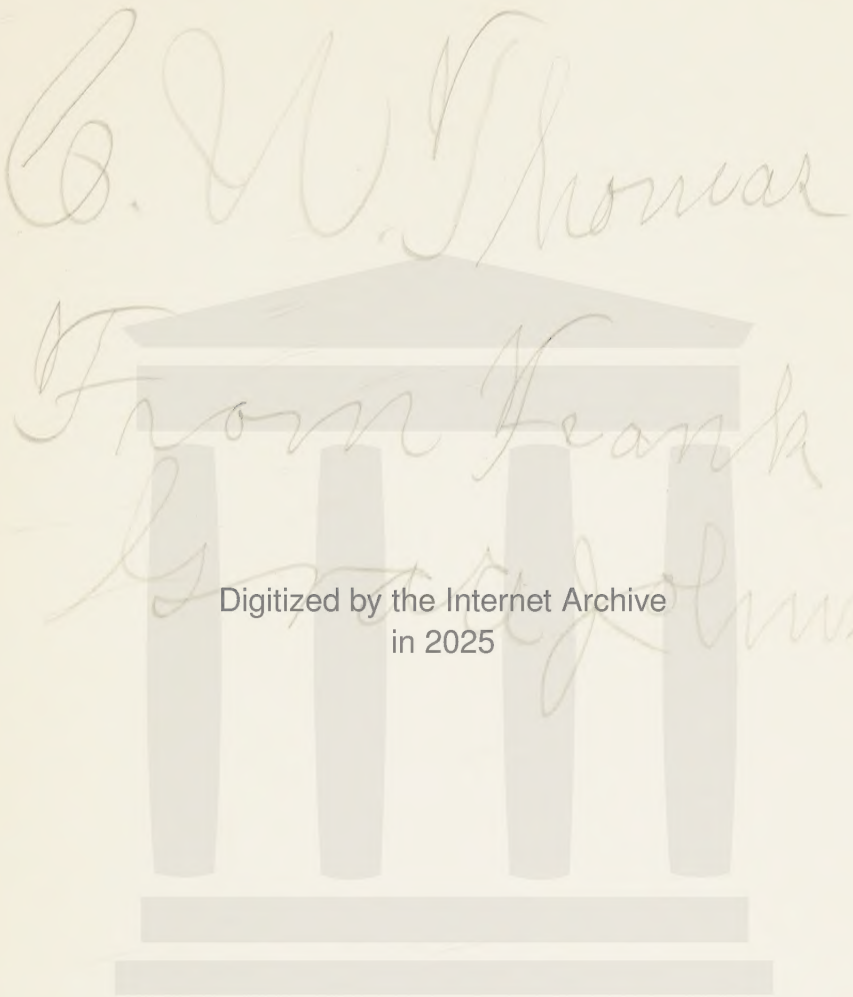

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BY

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO MY FRIEND, SENATOR ARTHUR CAPPER, WHOSE PUBLICATIONS REACH MILLIONS OF READERS AND WHOSE AMBITION HAS BEEN TO MAKE PRACTICAL CONTRIBUTION TO HUMAN WELFARE IN THE DAILY LIFE OF OLD AND YOUNG.

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THIS series of short sermons on the teaching of Jesus was prepared and written for Capper's Farmer. The welcome given this series by the readers of that magazine has prompted the publishers to bring out this volume, with the expectation that in addition to the number of readers who have read the matter as it appeared in the magazine, there might be also a wider audience.

I have made no attempt at what is sometimes called "fine writing." The object of these sermons is simply to find out from the Gospels what Jesus actually did teach, and then make application of His teaching to the persons and the times of today. The subjects on which Jesus spoke are remarkable for their variety and scope, and even more remarkable for their modern application. There is no subject which has to do with human conduct which is absent from Jesus' plain teaching. The material I have used is not taken from books about Jesus, nor is it comments on what others have written about him, but all the subjects discussed have been those recorded by His historians. I have tried not to preach, so much as to explain what Jesus meant. He talked about conduct. And conduct is the most important thing in human history. The way people behave is what makes life happy or unhappy, good or bad, right or wrong, worth while or a failure. And that is the purpose of these sermons, and my hope for the welfare of all who read them.

CHARLES M. SHELDON.

What Did Jesus Really Teach?

REPENTANCE

REPENT, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

If Jesus Christ were to come back to this world, and begin to teach in any part of it, what do you think he would take for the text of his first sermon?

We may not be able to answer that question, but we do know what was the text of the first sermon he did preach when he began his public life.

And it is a remarkable fact that he used the same text that John the Baptist had used, "Repent!" The Gospel historian says: "John came, preaching repentance." And the historian, going on with the acount, says: "Now after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel'."

The word "repent" means literally to turn around; to go the other way. The meaning of it as John used it, and as Jesus repeated it, is clear. Before a man can become a real disciple of Jesus, he must change his habits, if they have been wrong, and take on new habits that are right.

In other words, being a Christian means being something very positively. If a man has been a liar, he must become truthful; if he has been a thief, he must become honest; if he has been making money his god, he must begin to make money his servant; if he has been a drunkard, he must become sober; if he has been a disbeliever, he must have faith in God and heaven; if he has led a selfish and self contained life, he must change that habit, and think of others; if he has had race prejudice and hate in his heart for people of other nationalities, he must purge those feelings from his heart, and practice the brotherhood of man; if he has not believed in prayer and the future, he must accept the teaching of Jesus about those mighty realities, and become a man of childlike faith in the eternal revelation that Jesus made.

Now if we ask this question again about the probable text of Jesus' sermon if he were to appear in any part of the world today, it does not seem at all doubtful that he would take the same text again, even after all the years since he was here.

For after all, what does the world need to do more than to repent? There is large selfishness among the peoples of the world. There is injustice, and cruelty, and hate and suspicion among the nations. Before the world can be better it must get rid of its meanness and its crookedness, and its indifference to sacred and eternal things. And it cannot get rid of all that wrong by going to college or making money or securing power, or going to church or being cultured and educated.

Jesus taught so plainly that a boy 10 years old can understand it fully, that the only way to become his disciple was to become a new person in the habits of life. And there was only one way to do that, and that was to turn around and go the other way.

The early Christians were marked men and women because they were so different from the pagans around them. Early in the history of Christianity the historian says of the people in one town where the Christian disciples had come to carry on meetings, "Those that have turned the world upside down have come to our city." And it will always be true that if the world is going to be turned upside down from its wrongs and made right, it will have to be done by those who have first of all turned themselves around from lives of self into lives of service.

The teaching of Jesus about repentance strikes at the very roots of human behavior. Being a Christian is not simply subscribing to a church creed, or enrolling with others in some religious society. It is a vital and practical putting into daily practice of all the virtues that go to make up the full grown man. Repentance is something more than being sorry for being found out. It is a resolve followed up by action that the sin one has committed will not occur again, by the help of God. Jesus did not condemn the woman caught in adultery, but he did say to her, "Go and sin no more." The only repentance worth anything is the kind that means a complete change of habit. It is more than remorse or regret. It goes to the heart of actual conduct. I think one reason why much of our so-called religious life in this world is so lacking in depth and sincerity is because those who profess to be Christians think that forms and ceremonies and man-made creeds are all that are necessary to put the stamp of Christian on one. That is not the way Jesus began to teach. Repent! Turn around! Make a new start. Go the other way! That is the way Christianity began its wonderful march across the centuries, and that is the way it must continue to go if this world is ever to be redeemed and brought up to the feet of God.

THE NEW BIRTH

AN OLD man was watching a young man who was stooping over a mud puddle by the side of a country road. He saw him fill a small bottle with the muddy water, cork it and put it in a tin box he was carrying. A little farther down the road he saw him repeat the same thing at another puddle.

The old man was curious to know what it was all about, and as he came up with the young man he asked him what he was doing. He answered pleasantly by saying that he was a student of natural history and was gathering specimens for microscopic study.

"Perhaps you would like to see what I have here," the student said. And the two sat down on a log by the roadside while the younger man took out his glass slides, opened the bottle and with a dropper placed one small drop of the muddy water on the glass, covered it with the other, and then, taking out of his specimen bag a microscope, he adjusted the slides and the focus and after looking thru the lens, asked the other man to take a look.

The old man took a look and started back in astonishment.

"Do you mean to say that you found that in a mud puddle!" I never saw anything like it!"

"No, and you never would without a microscope."

"And what do you call it?" the old man asked, taking another and a longer look.

"That is a vorticella," replied the naturalist. "And at certain seasons of the year there are millions of them swimming about in fresh and salt water pools."

"They are the most beautiful things I have ever seen," said the old man, and he detained the naturalist long to feast his eyes on the grace ful swinging bells that even in that film of water between the two pieces of glass seemed to have all the room they wanted.

"And don't forget," said the student as he went his way, "that you cannot see them at all unless you look thru the lens."

A traveler was walking thru Trafalgar Square, London, one evening and was attracted by a crowd about a telescope which was pointed toward the planet Jupiter. He asked one of the crowd what could be seen, and the answer from the telescope owner was to take a look.

He paid his penny, and loked and started back in amazement. For he saw a sight he had never seen before, the moons of Jupiter wheeling with majesty about the great planet.

"I have never seen that before!" he said as he moved away to give another star gazer a chance.

"No, and you cannot see that without the telescope!" said the owner of it.

The new birth which Jesus taught is one of the most wonderful of all experiences which can ever come to a human being. For a real look at life thru the person of Jesus reveals wonders and beauties that have been concealed before the soul began to understand life as Jesus reveals it to his disciples.

To the true Christian, "all things," as Paul said once, "become new. Old things have passed away." When a human being has been born anew he reads history in a new way. People look different to him. If the Bible has been a dull or a strange book, it becomes illuminated with power. If prayer has seemed a useless exercise, it becomes a delightful companionship with the Divine. The whole world becomes a place not simply of drudgery or of painful tasks or a chase for pleasure, but it is a great preparatory school where the soul is getting ready for an existence of wonderful beauty and unending delight.

The new birth is not a theological matter, it is a matter of looking at everything thru the lens of Jesus. The Christian becomes habituated to measuring everything by the Jesus standard. Are people commonplace? But Jesus said they were the most valuable of all things. Is everyday life uninteresting and even painful? But Jesus taught that it was an eternal thing, capable of enormous change and unending power. Is life a mistake or a blunder because of the presence of evil or poverty or disease and death? But Jesus taught that there was a future where all should be free from unhappiness.

When, therefore, Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born anew," all he meant by it was that life should be viewed thru the eyes of the Master of life. No longer does the man who is a Christian view life thru the commonplace measure of things or events, but he looks at it thru the divine measurement which gives him glimpses of beauty and power such as one sees when he looks thru the microscope and the telescope. Jesus is the Revealer of life as it really it. That is what is meant by being born again or being born anew. Is it not worth while to see the universe of Life thru the lens of Jesus? Truly, He is the one Person of all history Who can unfold the miracle of existence and make all things new. Try it, and change your old definition of Life.

THE FIRST THING

SEEK ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." Three great passions have ruled mankind from the beginning of the history of man on the earth: The love of money; the pursuit of pleasure; and the ambition of power.

These passions have for unnumbered multitudes held first place in the program of daily life. And today, after all the years of the teaching of Jesus, these three things are the main things with millions. All over the world, men of all nationalities, and of all faiths and creeds awake in the morning to ask as the first question, "How can I make money? How can I get pleasure? How can I gain power?"

Knowing this great common fact of humanity, Jesus calmly says to the whole world, "Seek first the Kingdom of God."

That is revolutionary. The doing of that would change the history of civilization. Wherever it has truly been tried, it has changed history. The plans and purposes of multitudes of people have been completely made over by obedience to that teaching.

Just what does Jesus mean by that teaching?

He means putting the spiritual above the material. He means putting the things of God above the things of men.

Suppose a man is the owner and director of a newspaper. And suppose as a Christian, a man who calls Jesus Master, he is going to try to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. It means that he will use that newspaper as a vehicle to advance the things that God wants, and that righteousness will be the key word that will run all thru that printed journal.

In other words, if the man acts honestly in editing and publishing of all matter in his paper, there cannot be anything in it that will conflict with the plain will of God.

But suppose in the obedience to that teaching, the owner of the paper finds that he cannot make the paper pay? Ah, that is the place where the average man of the world says that the teaching of Jesus is not practical. But the best thing that might happen to the owner of the paper would be to lose money, if in the losing of it he found his own soul. For it has happened more than once in this world that when in obedience to the will of God men lost money or place, they have found a thousand times over something better, and have gained, instead of lost, in manhood, and virtue and Godlikeness.

But consider for a moment what obedience to this teaching of Jesus would mean to civilization. Tomorrow morning all the energies of mankind are going to be directed by this "first" of Jesus. Newspapers, railroads, factories, theaters, legislatures, parliaments, banks, amusements, schools, business of every description, all are going to seek "first" the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Not money first, not pleasure first, not power first, but God first. What an upheaval in the

ordinary routine of politics and money making! What changes in the way multitudes would measure their fellow men! What an overturning of self and what a setting up of service in the market place and the political arena! It is not easy to imagine a world where the first thought of the multitude every morning is God and His will instead of the universal passions of money, pleasure and power.

But there is a very remarkable promise connected with this particular teaching of Jesus which we must not forget. Many persons say, and some who are reading this sermon may be saying as they read, "This thing cannot be done without risking everything. It is not practical as society is organized. Men must look after number one or be lost in the scramble."

But at this point, look at the astonishing economic statement of Jesus. He goes on to say that if mankind does seek first the Kingdom of God, all the material things they need will be added to them. The money that is necessary for existence and happiness, the pleasure, the power, all will come flowing into a man's life if he obeys the teaching to seek first the Kingdom.

This is a most interesting and tremendously important statement if true. It means that Jesus is practical in the greatest degree. He is no idle or theoretical dreamer. He states an economic fact when he says that what we call material prosperity and material happiness will go hand in hand with making the Divine will in every part of life the rule of life.

The world has not yet put this great principle to the test. One of the most interesting things that awaits the story of civilization is the chapter that some generation will write when all business, all energy of men, shall put the "first" of Jesus into daily practice. We cannot help wondering what would happen to the armies and navies of the world if those who keep them going should try to practice the "first" of Jesus. And what would happen to any form of unjust or selfish industrial sysem if the "first" of Jesus would be put into actual practice?

It makes no difference what we think about the practical outcome of this teaching. We have not yet tried it out. When we once do try it out we will emerge from the dismal struggle of one against another in trying to get there first, and civilization will for the first time begin to know the joy and the beauty of universal happiness and power.

I AM THE WAY

WHEN Jesus was born, the Greek and Roman world had lost faith in the old religions. The pagan nature worship and the old myths no longer interested them. The presiding deities of the pagan world were almost without exception dissolute, lying, drunken, and quarreling gods. All over the world there was a question as to he way of life. Philosophers did not give the people any satisfaction, but rather added to the general confusion and doubt.

In Palestine, the home of Jesus, what might be called the religious class was, for the most part, narrow minded and hypocritical. It had degenerated into a worship of forms and traditions that choked all glad and free expression, and added burdens of form and ritual upon a people that were already weighted down with rules of life that were ridiculous in their application.

Then, with a sudden coming into all this stagnation and questioning of everything, Jesus came, like a refreshing breeze over a sultry plain, and in these few words cleared up the atmosphere of doubt and dissatisfaction that had been brooding over millions of hearts. "Do you want to know the Way?" He said, "I am the Way. Do you want to know the Truth? I am the Truth. Do you want to know the meaning of Life? I am the Life."

This was a new teaching. The Greek and Roman philosophers had never said that. The scribes and Pharisees whom Jesus called hypocrites, as they were, had never offered the perplexed people any relief of this sort for their religious comfort. But Jesus at once opened the door to a stability of faith in something that could be depended on. He came to assure the human race that there was a place where the soul could rest without fear and without doubt concerning the great things that have to do with conduct and eternal life.

Very many people today in our generation, are questioning the existence of God. Articles are being written in magazines to prove that there is no God. The Russian government forbids any teaching about God in the public schools, and there are actual organizations in America where the existence of a Divine Being and the fact of a future are being denied.

But to the Christian disciple who wants the truth about these tremendous things as much as any one, the answer to all that is what Jesus said about them. He is the Truth. Therefore what He said about God and the future life settles the matter. Jesus never tried to prove the existence of God. He took Him for granted, without argument. Neither did Jesus ever try to prove the fact of a future world. He spoke of it as naturally as He spoke of anything that is every day open to the senses. That settles the matter for the Christian. He rests his soul there without doubt and without fear.

Or suppose a question arises about the right way of life. If Jesus is the "way," all the disciple has to do is to read about the life of Jesus to find out what He took. Then that is the way for the disciple to go. "It is the way the Master trod; shall not the servant tread it still?"

If Jesus is the Life He said He was, His disciples do not need to ask some philosopher or some modern magazine writer about the best way to life, but they go to Jesus who lived as never man lived. The Apostle John says of Him, "In Him was life, and the life is the light of men." The way to find out what life is at its best is not to go to those who deny the existence of God, but to Him who lived every moment in the presence of His heavenly Father. Men do not go to a person who has never studied astronomy to learn about the wonders of the starry heavens, but they go to those who have studied the stars and know their names and their movements.

In like manner, if we want to know about God and Heaven and the best way to live we go to that Person who in all history was best acquainted with divine ways and understood as no man ever did the eternal facts of life.

It is worth while to note that all this centers about a Person. Jesus did not say, "This is the way and the truth and the life." He said, "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life."

The whole thing centers about His own personality. And that is where mankind wants it to be. A cold philosophical statement never warmed the human heart of caused it to act for the common good. Not even an ethical or moral precept apart from a living person has much power over action. But when the way of life and the truth of life, and life itself are caught up in a Person who shows in His own example what He means by the teaching, then the human race is interested. An airship that sometime will cross the Atlantic driven by the mysterious power of radio, may create wonder, but an airship with a human being in it, like Lindbergh, creates at once not only wonder but admiration and affection. Abraham Lincoln was known as "honest Abe." No one questioned his truthfulness. Like that, only far more, the world has not questioned and never will, the truthfulness of Jesus. It was a personal illustration that history records. We can trust it even more than we trusted the word of the great American. For Jesus could not deceive the human race and be what He was.

THE FATHER GOD

SOMETIMES two words mean more than a whole book of words. This is true of the two words that begin all over the world as "The Lord's Prayer," which Jesus taught His disciples. The words, "Our Father" spell the definition that Jesus wants the whole world to have of God.

In all the history of the human race from the beginning of any account of it, there have been two widely believed definitions of God. One has been the picture of a great cause, impersonal, powerful, but indifferent to human affairs. The other definition held to by millions of ignorant and superstitious human beings, has been the picture of a cruel and malignant being, all powerful who must be approached with fear and bribed with gifts.

But when Jesus came, the definition of a God who cared for His own creation, and loved what He had made, became the definition of millions of people, millions of whom never had thought of God except as a monster of cruelty, or a being who must be appeased with sacrifices, even to the extent of killing one's own children.

Humanity today can make its choice of a God who is simply a great unknown creator or cause, or it can make its choice of a God who rules with an iron hand and takes delight in punishment, or it can take the God that Jesus revealed when He taught His disciples to say "Our Father."

If we accept the definition of Jesus of the Fatherhood of God, we at once enter upon a wonderful understanding of life. If God is a Father, and not an impersonal cause or a cruel and revengeful deity, then the meaning of life takes on a new aspect.

If you who happen to be reading this sermon are a father, how do you regard your own children, if you are a loving father? And of course, the Father God that Jesus taught could not be anything but a loving God. One of Jesus's disciples, John, gave the best definition we have of God when he said "God is love." That picture of the Divine Being no doubt John caught from what Jesus kept saying about the Father. Now, a true father, one who loves his children, will do everything in his power to help them to be what they ought to be. He will protect them from evil but he will not take away their own power of choice. He will love them even when they disobey him, and he will never cease to do all that a faithful father can do.

Well, I do not know how we are to understand the Fatherhood of God in all its wonder unless we understand it in terms of our own human fatherhood. If God is really good, He certainly will not fall below the best that any human father can do. If God is love He will exhibit in His own treatment of His children the same traits that every loving human father shows.

Here, then, is the place where we begin to understand something of the great purpose of God in the creation of man in His own image. It

was to create a human race capable of everlasting possibilities. This did not mean the elimination of what we call evil or trouble or sorrow or pain. But it did mean and it does mean and always will mean the final triumph of divine creation. If God is my Father He is not going to be a defeated Father. His creation is going to have a good reason for being.

And more than all else, the Fatherhood of God means the final union of all races of men. The God that Jesus believed in and taught is a God who can be understood and loved by all mankind. Fatherhood is common to every race and to all sorts of peoples. The picture that Jesus drew of a heavenly Being who had compassion on His children is not a new thing to human fathers of all races and conditions. It is as old as the race itself.

It makes all the difference in the world what kind of a God you have as you think of a divine being. The human race has not risen very far above the thought it has had of God. Has God been to millions a being of cruel and capricious habits, reckless of what humanity suffered so long as His own dominion is assured? Then these millions have remained in the darkness of superstition and fear. Has God been to other millions simply a blind force, a creative energy, impersonal and cold? Then to these millions the result of such a belief has been a deadening of mental and moral forces that has been a blight on progress and happiness.

It is only when God is known and loved as a personal Father that the human race has begun to move forward into new and happier ways of life. It makes no difference how much we may be puzzled by the facts of actual sin and suffering in this world, the fact remains that even for those who suffer and feel the burden of it, the faith in a good God who will sometime make full compensation for it all has been and always will be the greatest comfort and joy of life. The Fatherhood of God as Jesus taught it is the very foundation of human happiness and progress. If it is wiped off the map of the heart, there remains only the choice of a cold creative cause, or the dropping back into the dismal darkness of a Deity who lives only to punish and finally destroy.

The God of Jesus is the God of final triumph of good over evil. That ought to satisfy the longing of mankind, and it does.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN

A FRIEND of mine who has lived in China for 27 years and has entered fully into the life of the people tells me that they constantly make him think of his American friends. He often finds himself calling them by the names of well known friends of his in this country.

Another friend who is teaching in an American school in Smyrna, Turkey, writes me that the Turkish boys and girls are just like the boys and girls in Kansas. "They have the same anatomy, they eat and sleep just like our boys and girls, they have the same feelings, their minds work just like ours, and they are moved by the same appeal."

These are the statements of men who have come to know these people in other lands from long acquaintance. Their verdict is that the peoples of other lands whom we have been in the habit of thinking of as "queer" or "strange" or "different" are really more like us than they are unlike us. And as a matter of fact there are far more likenesses among all the different races than there are unlikenesses.

Which reminds me of a story about two little girls who lived next door to each other. Peeking thru a hole in the fence at the back yard, one little girl asked the oher to come over and play with her. But in reply she said, "No, I don't like you!" "And why don't you like me?" asked the other little girl. "Because," was the triumphant answer, "I don't know you!"

Yes, that has been the source of much of the race hate and race feeling all thru the centuries. We have not known the peoples of the earth, therefore we have not liked them. But Jesus brought into the world a nw definition of people. They were all children of God. And the disciples went forward with the definition that Jesus gave them until we find Paul saying in one of his letters: "Seeing that ye have put off the old man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of Christ that created him, where there cannot be Greek and Jew, cricumcism and uncircumcism, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, or freeman; but Christ is all and in all." And following that broad statement of the unity of the human race, the same writer says: "For God hath made of one blood all nations that dwell upon the face of the earth."

"Race hate," says H. G. Wells, the modern English historian, "is the worst sin of mankind." It certainly is one of the sins that has led to about as much trouble and confusion as any other known to men. It has created and continued war, it has led to riots and bloodshed and injustice and oppression The teaching of Jesus that all men are brothers is a revolutionary teaching, which if obeyed would change a large part of human history and bring in a new chapter of human progress.

It is about time that we who live in this country began to know something about the great qualities of people whom we have been in the habit of despising. A short time ago the American Legion offered a prize of $750 for the best essay in the English language written by any

boy or girl in any grade or high school anywhere under the flag, on the subject, "What Can the American Legion Do for Our Country?"

During the contest over 50,000 essays were written and submitted to the committee, and when the award was finally made it went to a little Chinese boy only 13 years old, in the eighth grade, living in Honolulu.

A little while ago the Daughters of the American Revolution in the Hawaiian Islands offered a large prize for the best essay in English by any boy or girl in the public schools on the subject, "My Ideal Character," and hundred of essays were sent in, written by several different races including scores of the Caucasian race, and the prize went to a Japanese lad in the Hilo high school. And his "Ideal" was Jesus.

The practice of Jesus's teaching about the Brotherhood of man would in a short time put an end to war. It would bring to the knowledge of the different races the true qualities that make them interesting. It would reveal the contributions that different peoples have made to the art and the learning and the happiness of the world.

One young man who represented a type of American not well known by Europe created friendly feeling for America when he modestly landed on French soil after his adventurous voyage across the Atlantic. Many former Americans, of the tourist type, had not given Europe a favorable impression. People for the first time in a dramatic manner learned that there were other kinds of Americans besides those that come over to squander money and time. It would pay the people of this country to fit out international ships and fill them with students of history and the world, and send them around it to learn about the great brotherhood of man and increase its knowledge. It would help to bring in an era of good will and the reign of universal peace.

THE FACT OF A FUTURE

THE human race in all the ages has generally had some belief in a future and has longed for the continuance of life after the physical death. This hope has persisted in spite of all doubt and argument. Until, today, after all the centuries, it is probably safe to say that more human beings believe in a future than ever before in history. And it must be noted that this belief is not confined to the ignorant and uneducated but it is held by the most highly educated and enlightened.

The increasing belief in the after life is, without any question, due to the life and teaching of Jesus. He same into a world torn by passion, swept with sorrow, rent with trouble. It was, and it is, a world full of pain, of disease, trouble, broken columns, heartache, anguish, old age, failing faculties of body and mind, and then death.

Jesus understood all this. To multitudes existence was a burden, too heavy to be borne. Questions rose up in a flood denying the goodness of a Creator who was powerful enough to make a universe, but for some reason did not have enough power to make life worth living. Jesus came to all this unrest and fear and foreboding and anger on the part of humanity and quieted the tumult of their hearts and minds by the assurance that there would be compensation in another world. His disciples took up the assurance, and probably from other discourses Jesus made, and of which we have no record, they formed a picture of that other existence which went so far as to say that in that other world "God Himself would wipe away all tears from the eyes" of those who had sorrowed in this earthly life.

And again, as in the case of His teaching of "The Way of Life," we find that the Resurrection is made a personal matter, and based on Jesus-own rising. He did not say, "This is the Resurrection and the Life." But—"I am the Resurrection and the Life." Instantly the whole thing becomes personal. And to prove to the whole world that He is the resurrection, Jesus rose from the dead, so that His disciples afterwards could say, "As He rose, so shall we also rise."

I think it is safe to say that no event in all history is so well proved by the facts as the rising of Jesus from the dead. Any well educated and intelligent court would take the evidence as splendid proof of the event. And the intelligent world today does accept the evidence and the world goes its way with the cloud of fear driven away and the sunshine of another world shining over the hard path of this one.

It ought to be easy to measure the tremendous value of his belief in the future that Jesus has created in the hearts of million, of all that great multitude that in all the centuries has lived and died in that assurance. Belief in the resurrection takes away the challenge that broken hearts might throw at the Creator that He has made only part of life. The knowledge of another life after this, free from pain and sorrow and half worked out ambitions, the living hope in an existence that shall be all that imagination can picture of perfection—all this is beyond price. The fact of resurrection takes the sting out of pain; it removes the argument

about an unfair God who has taken advantage of his power to create man, only to disappoint him. It soothes the mourner in the ecstacy of grief over the loss of the little child, or the life companion or of the friend of many years, with the knowledge that there is a meeting place where there is to be no parting.

This teaching of Jesus finds our best reason in tune with it. We would not spend our best powers in creating some beautiful and wonderful thing, and then wiping it out. Neither does God do so foolish a thing as to make man in His own image, and then carelessly or cruelly destroy it, or allow it to come to an end. If man is made in the image of God, that very fact is proof of eternal life.

The Christian disciple is not waiting for some scientific or laboratory-made proof of the existence of life after death. He is satisfied with the proof of Jesus Himself. He said He would rise from the dead, and He did. He told the dying robber on the cross beside His own that they would be together in Paradise, or the abode of the happy. He appeared to several hundred reliable witnesses after the crucifixion. All that the disciple needs has been given him. If anyone asks me why I believe in another life after this earthly life, all I have to say is that Jesus said there was one. And proved it by rising from the dead. That is all the proof I need. It is all the proof the world needs. If science ever shall be able to prove, like mathematics, that there is a resurrection, as many scientists even now say can be done, it will simply be an added word to the one spoken by Jesus when He said, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die."

In the story "Quo Vadis," the crazy Emperor Nero, looking at the tortured Christian martyrs in the Colosseum, says, "They see something! What is it!" And one of his attendants says, "Yes, they see the Resurrection!"

Thru all time now and to come, the disciples of Jesus shall continue to see the resurrection and that vision shall take away the pain and sorrow and heartache and disappointments of this earthly life. Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift!

THE VALUE OF A HUMAN BEING

ONE SUNDAY, Jesus and some ofHis disciples were walking thru a field of wheat. The disciples were hungry and began to do what every farmer's boy has done (I have done it many a time on the old farm in South Dakota), they picked off the ripe heads of the wheat, rubbed them between their hands, blew away the chaff and ate the sweet kernels of the grain. What harm in that simple act?

But there were present in the field that Sunday some people called Pharisees, the only people Jesus ever got angry at. They had a ridiculous law that certain things could not be done on Sunday, like threshing grain. And when the disciples rubbed their palms together to separate the chaff from the wheat, according to these Pharisees they were threshing! So they found fault with Jesus and His disciples for breaking Sunday.

But Jesus rebuked them, and said that the Sunday was made for man, and not the man for Sunday. And the disciples went on eating. Their hunger was a natural thing to be satisfied. The satisfying of that hunger was more important than obedience to a foolish and senseless rule about Sunday.

A few days after that, on another Sunday, Jesus went to church. And while he was there he noticed a man in the congregation who had a maimed hand. The historian does not tell us who he was, but he might have been a carpenter and he needed that hand to hold a tool of labor. Now the Pharisees were present in church that day (for they went to church then, and some of them do yet), and they kept an eye on Jesus to see if he would break Sunday again and heal this man which by their foolish rule of Sunday Jesus ought not to do.

But he knew what they were thinking of and he said to them that if any of them had a sheep and it fell into a pit on Sunday, there was not one of them but would lay hold of it and lift it out. And then he added the words that will never be forgotten as long as mankind exists on the earth, "How much, then, is a man of more value than a sheep!"

And then to show his righteous contempt for their foolish Sunday rules he healed the man with the maimed hand and gave him a good one. It is worth while to remember always that this act of mercy to a man on Sunday was the beginning of the conspiracy of the Pharisees to put Jesus to death. In other words the tremendous event known as the crucifixion of Jesus can be traced right directly down to his illustration of the value he put on a human being. In that sense it can be truly said that Jesus died for mankind.

We put a value on everything in this world except that which is worth the most. We have prices attached to food and clothes and books and travel, and education and pictures and amusements and houses and land, but no one has ever been able to put a real value on a human being.

When Jesus used the word "sheep" he mean anything material. Just as if he should say, as he would, perhaps, if he were living now, "How

much is a man worth more than a railroad or a bank or a coal mine or a factory or a great city full of treasure!" That is, Jesus would teach mankind for all time that a human being is worth more than anything in the whole world. "What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world," he once said to emphasize the same truth, "and lose his soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

The reasons why a human being is worth more than a sheep or anything material are first because of the personal value. Every human being is a rare creation, a work of personal value, and when a thing is very rare is is very valuable. Then he is worth more than a sheep on account of the unknown value. No one can tell what a baby may grow into. The unknown in every child makes the child tremendously worth while. Add to that the known value of every human being in the way of influence to others, since we are all in debt to the past. And to crown all, the value of every human being can never be found out because of the divine value when the soul may be touched by God's spirit, and what seemed to be worthless becomes a thing of rare beauty and value, like Harry Monroe of Chicago, who was thought to be one of the worst men in the city, but when he was converted in the Pacific Garden Mission by Colonel Clark, he became one of the most useful men in Chicago. Look up the story of Jerry McCauley of New York and read the story of "Twice Born Men," by Harold Begbie, and see how men have been changed into new men by the power of the divine. These are not fairy tales or imaginative romances, but plain stories of everyday life, showing how useless men became wonderfully great in value when changed by the spirit of God.

Jesus illustrated this great teaching about the value of a man at the end of his life while on the cross. He turned to the dying robber and said to him: "Today you and I will be together in Paradise!" I think that is one of the most astonishing things ever said to a human being. The historian does not even mention this criminal's name. But he was a bloody, dirty, unknown ignorant man who had committed a crime and was being executed for it. Yet the Son of God, the sinless Man of history calmly told him that they would be companions together in the land of sinless happiness. It means that Jesus looked past the thing that hung on the cross that day and saw a redeemed human after 10,000 years had rolled around. That is the way he wants us to look at men. Think of them as they are going to be in the uncounted years of eternity. That is the way to measure the value of a man, worth more than a sheep.

THE BEAUTY OF HEAVEN

FOR MANY years a large part of the world, even that part called Christian, has had a vague and unsatisfying picture of Heaven. I can remember the Sunday school songs we used to sing in my father's church when I was a boy, and many of them pictured Heaven as a place where we would do nothing for all eternity but sing in a great choir, or fall on our faces forever and forever around some awful throne of the Almighty.

I was looking over one of those old Sunday school books the other day, and I could not help wondering where the writers of the queer hymns got their ideas of Heaven.

If Heaven really is going to be a place where we shall forever be doing nothing but sing hymns, I for one, am frank to say, do not look forward to it with any pleasure. For while I like to sing in a choir, I also like to do something else, and Heaven would certainly become anything but Heaven if that is all the redeemed will have to do.

Jesus said little about the particular conditions that we are going to meet in the other world. He settled the fact of another world by telling His disciples that He was going to it, but the details of its activity He did not outline. Sometimes we wish He had. We would like to know more than we do about it. I do not thing it is idle curiosity, but a natural desire to know something definite about the place where we are going to live forever.

Probably one reason why more is not told us about the other world in the Bible is because of the difficulty of explaining it. I find it difficult to tell my friends about some of the places on this earth that I have seen in my travels. I don't know how to put it into language we use to convey thought.

In one of his letters, Paul speaks of someone he had known who was "caught up into Heaven and heard words which it is not lawful for a man to utter." By that he probably means that what this man saw in a vision was so wonderful that human speech could not make it plain to the one who had not had such a vision.

But we do not need to be troubled by the silences of the Bible or of Jesus about the other world. What He did say about it is of such value that we can dwell on that, and use common sense imagination to fill out the unfinished picture.

"In my Father's House are many mansions," (or the better interpretation of the word is "abiding places.") "If it were no so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."

This is the language Jesus uses to describe Heaven. And it gives us a picture of that other world that is full of beauty.

I think the most dreary picture of Heaven would be the thought of it that left it without any place where the human soul could find itself at home. Among all the different organizations that belong to the human

family or to what we call civilization there is no place that can, in the long run, compare with what we know as "Home Sweet Home."

And it is one of the things among many others that we ought to be grateful for always that Jesus understood that, and in the best language of his own time he tried to give us for all time the picture of life as an "abiding place" and one prepared for us.

Right here, I am inclined to think, we are permitted to use our imaginations in carrying out the unfinished part of this thought. If Heaven is going to be a real home for us, there is no limit to the enjoyment and beauty of such a condition.

In the town or locality where you live do you know of anything more attractive than a well kept home? You drive around in any town and look at all sorts of buildings, some expensive and some grand, as public structures or institutions.

But you turn a corner and suddenly you come to a place that is not an institution owned by the state, but it is a home in which lives a family. You know it is, on account of the looks of it. There is a well kept lawn, some beautiful flowers and vines, there is a look of comfort and enjoyment about the porch or the way the front door invites you to come up the walk, and the whole place breathes of comfort and happiness and satisfaction, and without being told, you know that this is not a hotel or an asylum or a hospital or a reform school or a poor house or an institution, but a genuine home. And in the whole town you know there is nothing better than that place. That is heaven on earth.

Well, that which is heaven on earth, Jesus says will be heaven in Heaven. And in a well kept home on earth we know what joys enter and dwell there. Home is the place where the most sacred love of father and mother is consummated. Home is the place where little children play and learn and grow. Home is the place where human friendship finds its best fruitage.

For home is not a self-centered spot where only the families live. It is, rather, the open door for the finest human companionship known to mankind. And in the well kept home what a multitude of energies find occupation! No dullness there. No lack of variety. And over and above all, an abiding place. That is heaven, as Jesus wants the world to think of it. If it were not so He would have told us.

Thank God as long as life lasts for this definition of Heaven as Home. Multiply the most beautiful and happy home you have ever known here on earth, by an unnumbered quantity of the same, and then think of Heaven, and even that will fall short of what Jesus wants us to anticipate.

THE DRAWING POWER OF JESUS

WHEN Napoleon was making Montebello, the huge castle near Milan, Italy, his court headquarters during the Italian campaign, he said one day to Arnault, the French dramatist, because he knew Arnault would repeat every word Napoleon said: "The French government should bend before the power of one strong man." Meaning, of course, himself. In anticipation of that which in a short time actually did come to pass.

Measure that human egotism and its purpose with the words of Jesus, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

Napoleon's thought of his power was defined by what he could do to further his ambition as a world conquerer. If France incidentally was helped in any way by his own personal plans, that was only incidental. What he planned to do was for Napoleon, not for the people. For one of the life long habits of Napoleon, a thing he never tried to conceal, was his utter contempt for the people, both aristocrats and common.

But the utterance of Jesus, "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me," is the utterance of the world conqueror of another type. What Jesus foretold about His power is the power that will in the end bring the world into harmony with God's will, and insure the happiness of all peoples. Such a plan for power is as far removed from the Napoleonic sort as Heaven is far from hell.

This promise of Jesus about His power is being fulfilled. All the marks of human progress are the marks of Jesus's teaching. It is a slow process, but it is irresistible. If the human race has advanced in matters of general comfort and happiness and understanding of what life really means is is due to Christ. Not to Christianity, as the term is used in a political or historical sense, for that word, as well as the very word "Christian" has been twisted and debased and distorted in history. Yes, there are places in the world today where the very word Christian is simply a term for a political difference of view. But the power of Jesus by itself, not covered over with the centuries of misinterpretation of what He actually taught, that power marches majestically on, conquering and to conquer.

The declaration that Jesus so calmly made just before His death is all the more wonderful if we take into account the conditions that surrounded Him at the time He spoke.

He was a despised Jew of a conquered province belonging to the most powerful military machine in the world. He had no money, not even a place to lay his head that belonged to Him. His friends were among the poor, and the working class, men without influence or standing in society. In a few days, by His own statement He was going to be put to death as a criminal. He had no army, He had written no books, had not established any institution, had founded no society that was known to anyone. What possible chance, as men count chances, did such a person have to create a condition so powerful that in the course of three centuries the very representative of the military machine that crucified

Him as a troublesome peasant carried His name at the head of His army and called Him Master?

It reads like a romance written by some crazy brain far beyond the reach of mortal power. And yet, the power of Jesus today is so far beyond that of Napoleon, measured by the highest he ever reached, that it cannot be compared with it. For the power of Jesus is over men's thoughts and conduct and goes far beyond any physical conquest. Napoleon killed hundreds of thousands of young men to gratify his earthly ambition. Jesus has saved millions of men from spiritual and moral death in all the ages by inspiring them with eternal ambitions to overcome their passions and win the salvation of their better natures. There can be no comparison between the two kinds of power. The Star of Bethlehem shines uncounted spaces above the star of the man of destiny.

The assurance of Jesus that He would draw all men to Himself ought to keep His disciples calm in the midst of all sorts of attacks made on the church and the Bible and the things that Jesus believed in. The pea shooters are abroad with their little magazine articles and their little books called "fiction" rightly. They will make no more impression on the power of Jesus than a pop-gun against a pyramid. We need have no fear that the power of Jesus will give way to some new religion or to some modern school of thought. The things He taught are the basic things of human conduct and there are no others. The refreshing thing about the religion of Jesus is the fact that it simply belongs to the human structure, and cannot be set aside. It is eternal. We may come to know it better, but we cannot change it. It is as abiding as the light of Heaven, and as lasting as the laws of God.

The glory of Jesus is His universal appeal. "All men," he says. No nation left out. "God so loved the world." Not some small part of it. Napoleon had a dream of world conquest, and died regretting that he did not get to India. But Jesus died in the faith that His work was finished. He rose to the full understanding that His power would have no end. We do not need to seek for another teaching, Jesus satisfies us. He will continue to satisfy all men for all time.

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

IMMEDIATELY the man of the world says, "It can't be done!" But there it stands. Jesus calmly made it a part of His teaching, and whatever He taught, He meant could be learned, for He was no theorist or dreamer, but the most practical of men, and all His teaching was given to be put into daily use.

Of course, even the man of the world will confess, if you put it up to him, that if love did prevail all over the world, it would be a far different and better world. But in the same breath he says, "We are not ready for the idealism of Jesus. The world has not gone that far yet."

But suppose that tomorrow morning France awoke to the practical side of Jesus' teaching and began to say, "Come, let us put it in practice. We will begin to love these Germans that we have hated and disliked for so many years."

Very well! Now will anyone tell us what would be the result? Of course, if the change of heart were really genuine, a good many things would happen. A standing army, so far as Germany is concerned, would no longer be necessary for France. At the present time France is supporting the largest standing army in the history of the world. She is also working day and night in the construction of airplanes and submarines on a scale never known in all history. But if she began to love her old enemy, Germany, a large part of this army and a large part of the preparation for the next war could be dismissed.

But that would be only a small part of the actual happening if both France and Germany obeyed in good faith the teaching of Jesus to love your enemies. The greatest result would take place in the hearts of men. The treasuring of hate in the heart is an expensive thing when it comes to armies and navies and war material which sap the financial power of a nation. But that is a small matter by the side of the damage done the heart of man when he lets hate have the right of way.

Hate is the most narrowing of all feelings. It turns the nature in on itself and feeds on the very vitals of human sweetness and goodness. It strangles ideals and crushes friendship and warps the generous outgoings of life. It crucifies the higher at the expense of the lower, and it blinds the eyes of the soul to the beauties of heaven.

Is this thing impossible? Can men really learn to love those that "despitefully use them and persecute them?" There must be some good reason why Jesus made this a part of His teaching program. He did not say anything carelessly or without having thought it thru. He must have known what the result would be if men loved their enemies and did good to those who did them harm. For He was the statesman of the world as well as its Redeemer. The two words go together. For Jesus is the Redeemer of men because He saves men on all sides of life, socially as well as personally, and a Christian cannot love his enemies without being saved, internationally as well as personally.

During the war I was in England at the time when it was said that the British had their backs to the wall. It was a dark and sorrowful

time. I was in many English homes, but in hardly one where there had not been a death from the fearful fighting on the Marne. Very many German prisoners were being cared for out at Alexandra Palace, a most beautiful place on the edge of London.

There in the wonderful building where a few years before, delegates of the world Christian Endeavor Convention had met, many of the German prisoners were housed, some of them members at the time of the German Endeavor societies. I remembered some of them whom I had seen at that time.

The English gave their prisoners the full use of the pipe organ for their concerts, they furnished them with the best of food and allowed them many privileges, they went and came with great freedom and when the Armistice was declared many of these Germans went back home with feelings of genuine affection for their enemies because, to a great extent, the actual teaching of Jesus had actually been applied by the British prison authorities to the men who had been captured and were held as prisoners of war. And I know to my own personal knowledge that many of these young Germans who had only a short time before in that very place stood up and sung the international songs of the Christian faith went home, in their hearts registering a vow that never again would they make enemies of Englishmen.

Would this teaching of Jesus work? It does work. The wonder of it all is that the world does not try love instead of hate. Love never fails. Hate always fails. Jesus knew in the most profound way the best way to deal with feelings. The feelings that create suspicion, that narrow the emotions down to self defense, the feelings that leave a bitterness instead of sweetness on memory, the feelings that bring rmorse and constrict the affections are the feelings that must give place to human breadth of action and the wide sweep of friendship. The cure for hate is love. There is no other cure, and it is practical, more practical than war. The world will yet learn that lesson and when it does, the Brotherhood of man will be born.

THE BIGGEST BUSINESS IN THE WORLD

WHAT is the Biggest Business in the World?

The biggest material business in the world is farming. In the United States Uncle Sam put the value of farms at over 78 billion dollars.

Next to farming as big business might come the factory output. By a recent census made for the first time by the Government, the annual output of factories of this country is over 75 billion dollars. In the list of big business might be put fuel, transportation, banking. The bank clearances of New York City are more than 700 million dollars a day.) The automobile business is very big. So is the motion picture industry connected with the theater. (The motion picture business and the theaters of this country last year took in 100 million dollars more than all the Protestant church took in for all their church work, including home and foreign missions and all the upkeep of buildings, salaries, and new building.) We might add to big business the running of the Government, which now exceeds 10 billion dollars, annually.

No one would deny that these activities and many more are big business. But what is the biggest business in the world?

The biggest business in the world is not material, but spiritual. The biggest business in the world is changing men's minds.

Suppose you face a human being who does not believe in God. He does not believe in prayer. He does not love little children. He believes in war and hates his enemy. He never reads a Bible. He does not belong to a church. He is unfaithful in his family relations and a dangerous citizen.

Suppose now, you change that man's habits, and make of him a man who believes in God and is eager to obey His commandments. He becomes a member of a church, a lover of the Bible, a lover of little children. He even learns to love his enemies and prays and works for universal peace. He becomes an esteemd and useful citizen and lives to bless the community.

If you do a thing like that in the transformation of a man's inner life you have done a bigger piece of business than making an automobile, or running a factory, a railroad, of a motion picture house. Because the changing of the world's mind is of greater importance to its happiness and power than the doing of anything else known to business.

And that is what Jesus told His disciples to do. The task is stupendous. Here He stands facing a little group of human beings, all of whom could have gathered in a small room, and facing the pagan world, with its militarism, and it materialism, and it gross physical habits and its infidelity, and He calmly tells them to go out into that sort of a world and change the minds and thoughts and purposes of all the people of all the nations, and He adds these words: "Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded or taught, you."

Can anyone imagine naything more astounding than that? In comparison with that sort of business the running of a railroad is child's play on a summer afternoon, and the making of automobiles is like having nothing to do.

The command of Jesus to make disciples of the nations has never been taken back. It still holds good. And it places on His disciples of this generation the task of making over the habits of mankind. In the United States, for example, there are today over 26 million church members who call themselves disciples. This is the biggest corporation in this country, organized to carry on the biggest business known to mankind. To it is committed this task. If it cannot carry it on there is no other organization that will do it. The church is a failure and is missing its main reason for existence if it does not get at this business, the most important ever known.

Before the church can carry on this business it must get together as it has not yet done. (There are more than 100 different sects calling themselves Christian in this country alone.) Before this business of changing men's minds can go on, the church will have to learn how to love all sorts of people; it will have to train up an army of the young to go all over the world as missionaries; it will have to practice the brotherhood of man as it never has yet; it will have to put itself positively against war and militarism; it will need to have a daily paper that will speak the message of evangelism and tell the story of the Cross; it will have to arouse the pew to work with the pulpit to make converts, and usher in the new evangelism carried on by the church members, many of whom at present do nothing but go to church and go home again; it will have to hold prayer meetings Sunday morning instead of preaching so much; and it will have to believe in the Power from on high instead of programs made out of book reviews and entertainment for the masses.

The biggest business in the world dignifies and ennobles Christianity. Jesus is at the head of the most important business this world needs. The Christian who can make another is the most necessary man in the community. For there is nothing the world needs so much as to go straight instead of crooked, right instead of wrong, clean instead of dirty, loving instead of hating, serving instead of living for self. And that miracle of regeneration depends upon the application of the teaching of Jesus to everyday life. If it is applied, heaven will begin here, and be a foretaste of that which will be hereafter.

THE DIVINE WORKER

ONE OF THE most remarkeable things about Jesus is the fact that He worked with His hands as a carpenter in a little hill town of Palestine for 18 years, and He was in public life as a teacher less than three years. Why was that?

Here was a Person who must have felt stirring in Him great powers of mind to influence the thought and conduct of mankind. He looked out on a world that was cursed with war and impurity and hate and selfishness and it all must have appealed to Him to come quickly and spend as much time as possible in making disciples and laying the foundation for a new religion among men.

But knowing and feeling all that, Jesus, instead of hurrying out into His public ministry at the age of 21 or at least 25, chose to remain in Nazareth unknown to the world, and unknown to His townspeople until He was 30 years old. Then, a brief and dramatic career, ending at the age of 32 or 33. Why?

It is not possible to answer this question truly unless one takes into account the character of Jesus. Here was one who measured life by something more than years. He must have seen that the influence of a life spent in that shop for a period six times longer than the period spent in public teaching and healing was going to have its tremendous effect on the thought and conduct of mankind. And I believe the one great lesson Jesus wanted to give the world by those 18 years in the carpenter shop was the lesson of the Dignity of Labor of the hand.

After all, in spite of all modern machinery and the wonders of science, the world is just as much dependent on the work of the human hand as it ever has been. There is nothing more necessary for civilization and for every day comfort and safety than the common work of the hand. If every one who works at physical toil were to stop and no one else ever took his place the world would face starvation and disease and ruin. Human beings in the big cities do not live in comfort and luxury on account of gigantic buildings and hotels and palatial residences, they do not exist on account of railroads and theaters and radios and electric cars and the wonders of scientific achievement, but they live on account of the food and fuel brought to them, and that is produced by the toiling humanity that uses its hands to get the necessities of life.

I think the man or woman who works on a farm or in a kitchen or in a mill or factory producing things that make life possible or comfortable or safe has a right to feel close to the Master Personality of all time, because they are doing just what He did for the larger part of His life. Jesus was in the truest sense a working man. He worked at his trade as a maker of necessary things needed by the folks of Nazareth, six times as long as He taught or preached. He knew as perhaps no one since has known what hand labor means to the world, and He chose to live most of His life as a carpenter on that account, that He might leave for all time the example of honest work, which is the basis of all civilization.

Let all those who are living this life of labor, therefore, rejoice in the thought of their great place in the world. Without you, farmer, cook, servant in the house, tired mother with hand work for children and home, cleaner of sewers and street cleaners, this old world of ours would soon fall into dirty ruin. Thank God if you are a toiler with the hand. The Master of all time was one. He set the example. You should be proud to follow it. The first reference made in the Bible to the Divine Being is a reference to Him as a worker. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." And then, after that astonishing recital of the process by which this universe came into being, the narrator says, "And on the seventh day God finished His work which He had made; And God rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made."

Is it any wonder that Jesus said, "My Father worketh?" The Almighty was and is the most distinguished worker in all the world. Let no human worker ever be ashamed of toil. For the Divine Being is the greatest toiler of all. He is the Master workman of the universe.

THE BLESSED PEACEMAKER

JESUS was born in a little conquered province of the greatest military machine the world ever knew. Rome stood for legoins and campaigns and conquest. Her roads were built for the quick movement of troops, her citizens were trained for bloody battles and her one aim was to be mistress of all the earth by the sword.

Into this warlike world, born into a country not His own, Jesus came, and in the beginning of His ministry He calmly said, "Blessed are the peacemakers." There were not many. Not a single peace society. Only now and then was there a man who stood for peace. Jesus might be called the first one of any importance. But the seed of that statement is bearing fruit.

Today there are scores of societies that are trying to earn that blessedness of which Jesus spoke. The Great War sowed not dragon's teeth for more war, but in bloodshed and tears it sowed a hate for war that is going to grow into a harvest of peace that in due time will feed the hungry world and mark the end of the reign of war on earth.

It is not generally known, but in the heart of Germany, in Saxony, there is a membership of the "League of Human Rights" nearly 100,000 strong, and increasing rapidly, until by the time this sermon is in print, it will have twice that number of members, all of whom are pledged never to go to war, and to refuse any military service if a war is declared. That would have been unthought of or undreamed of a few years ago.

The movements all over the world to discredit war as a way to settle differences between nations are more than we can mention in this brief space. Among them all none is more hopeful than the attitude of the women of the world. When a short time ago the women of Great Britain walked by hundreds up to London to protest against barrack life for their sons, they did a thing that had never been done before in all English history. And when the women of Berlin a year ago last Christmas printed circulars and distributed them all over Germany asking fathers and mothers not to buy toy swords and guns for their children, they did a thing never before done by German women.

The blessedness of universal peace that Jesus wants all the peoples of the world to know cannot be measured by a world that has known the cursedness of war for all these centuries. How many persons who are reading this sermon in the quiet comfort of their homes know that every morning since the Great War, 15 million human beings in central Europe have waked up hungry and will continue to live on the edge of starvation all their lives on account of that terrible tragedy? In Germany the life savings of hundreds of ministers and professors and artists were swept away when the mark went down to zero value. The enormous sums of money spent to carry on war would solve all the flood relief needs of the world, all the farm relief needed by all the farmers of the world, and endow universities and human welfare institutions in every country on the globe for all time to come.

The wickedness of war is only equaled by its stupidity. The Master saw that, as He looked down the bloody centuries, and His "blessedness" was a prophecy of the time to come when the whole human race shall be freed from war's alarms and every man "shall sit under his vine and fig tree and none shall make them afraid." For that "blessed" time let all who love their fellow men, and who do not want to rear their children to be food for powder, work and speak and pray until "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither learn war any more." Two years ago the history of this country was marked by a series ofgreat and terrible disasters by flood and tornado and gales that swept the ocean East and West. The Mississippi Valley and the New England states were the scenes of tremendous losses and the entire powers of the government were called out to give relief and consider means for the prevention of such disasters. At a meeting in Washington at which renowned engineers and experts were called together it was finally decided that the enormous sum of 250 million dollars at least would have to be spent to make the great valley of the great river safe in the future.

This seemed like an enormous sum to the taxpayer. But in the same press notice of this item was the notice that the war budget for the next year would be the enormous sum of 3,316 million dollars for the making of more material of a warlike character. But this sum is 12 times the amount required to prevent future floods in the great valley.

Does it seem strange to any thoughtful mind that Jesus would long to see humanity use wealth that for so many centuries has been poured out lavishly in making engines of destruction for upbuilding instead of destruction? How "blessed" the children of God will some time be when the peacemakers instead of the war makers rule over the destinies of nations, and men shake hands instead of fists across the lands and the seas. May that time be not far off. Amen!

THE GREATNESS OF A CHILD

THE DIFFERENCE between Christianity and every other religion is the emphasis which Jesus placed on the value of a child, and the absence of any such emphasis in the world religions before Christ was born. The Koran, which is the Mohammedan bible, does not contain a single word about the value of a child. The result of that silence is seen in the century old treatment of women and girls in all Mohammedan countries. In Egypt today only one woman out of 1,000 can read and write. In Algiers there is a compulsory city ordinance for school attendance for boys, but none for girls, and little girls 6 or 7 years old are found by the hundred in the rug factories weaving rugs instead of going to school. In Palestine, when the great earthquake occurred at Nablus, old Schechem, there were scores of old Mohammedan women who had not been out of their harems for more than 20 years, and until the earthquake tumbled their houses down they had never seen the streets of the buildings of the town, owing to the seclusion commanded by their husbands.

The rights of children began when Jesus pronounced that severe judgment on any one who offended "these little ones." He put it so strong as to say than any one who offended one of them had better have a mill stone hanged about his neck and be drowned in the depth of the sea! Could any language be more emphatic to drive home the definition Jesus had of a child's value? It was about as severe a statement as He ever made, and one may imagine the look on His face, and the power of His voice as He spoke to a generation that neglected its children, and did not even want the parents of some of them to bring the children to Jesus for a blessing.

Children are the Kingdom of God because each new generation has in it the possibility of a new chapter in human history. After all the years of human history no one is wise enough to predict what a child may be or do for either a blessing or a cursing to the home, or the nation, or the world.

Humanity has been a long time finding it out, but the early years of a human being are the most important in the shaping of habits and receiving impressions. It is a familiar saying that given complete charge of the training of a child the first seven years, the future character of the man or woman will be determined. That may not always be true, but there is enough truth in it, verified by long centuries of experience, to warrant the statement.

Out of more than 9,000 children trained in a city kindergarten under the direction of the most expert and trained teachers, not one has been found ever to have been in a police court or arrested for a crime. This is in the city of San Francisco. The habits of honesty, kindness, thrift, courtesy, clean speech, clean bodies, reverence for parents and for God as taught in the kindergarten have remained all thru the years of the growing chlid and have been built into the very structure of the character of the man and woman.

Children are far more receptive and intelligent than most people, even their parents, give them credit for. I confess I have been astonished many times to have children of 8 and 10 years of age, come up to me at the close of some public gathering or lecture and tell me how they have enjoyed reading one of my books, which I wrote for college boys and girls. I did not suppose the boys and girls before their teens would understand or care for stories written for an older audience. The father or mother or teacher or minister who thinks little Johnny and Mary do not understand what is being said around the table or in the class room or from the pulpit are destined to receive some sound shocks when they discover how much of the supposed old folks' conversation has been absorbed by the little circle that too often is ignored or even in some cases despised.

The early habits of religious training are habits that become a part of the manhood and womanhood of life, I shall never forget the early impression made upon my childish mind by the habit in our family of morning worship. As soon as a boy or girl in our home was able to read, mother gave each one a Bible. At morning prayers it was the proud privilege of each child to read aloud two verses of the Bible chapter for the day. Each member of the family, beginning with father, read two verses. In this way we read the entire Bible thru seven times before we went away from home to school or college. I was less than 6 years old when I first took part in this service. It left an indelible impression on my mind and has become an abiding part of my thinking and my convictions. The same has been true of every member of the home. These impressions were all made before the age of 10. They have not been effaced by years of study, of criticism, of controversy. The same is true of the habits of attendance on church and Bible school, of habits of punctuality, and clean living and kindness taught us all in the home from the time we were able to understand language. I have no doubt most of the enduring habits we all have are acquired before the age of 3 or 4.

The value of a child that Jesus emphasized cannot be lessened by the human race without endangering its life. If we neglect what He said about it, we may well fear the hanging of the mill stone of ignorance and stupidity about the necks of nations.

THE TEST OF THE FRUITS

THE JEWELER has what is known as "the acid test" by which he can tell whether a precious metal is real or false. Jesus has given the human race a "gold test" by which we may tell whether a person or a nation of a system is true or false, worthwhile or useless, safe or dangerous. And the test is infallible. "By their fruits shall you know them."

Civilization has been trying this test out in many cases and has found it reliable. For example, as time went on the world of civilized people tested the custom of duelling and found its fruits were a false definition of a man's "honor," and Great Britain and America and most of Europe abolished the custom.

Slavery was tried and tested out by the gold test of Jesus. As time went on, the human race discovered that the holding of human beings as chattel animals not only was an unspeakable outrage on human rights, but that the custom reflected back on the owners until it became unendurable, and slavery was abolished because its fruits sentenced it to be condemned.

The degradation of woman continued for centuries. She was denied the legal and national rights accorded to man. She was not treated as an equal before the law. The fruits of this treatment and the custom of the centuries were seen in the results of womanhood denied natural rights, such as the constant friction between the sexes and the growing feeling of uneasiness on the part of men that a great injustice was being done to women. As a result of these fruits woman has been given the ballot and even in Mohammedan countries within the last quarter of a century after watching the fruits of woman's seclusion and degradation, the customs of centuries are being rudely and swiftly broken and woman is being freed and the fruits are already being seen in happier homes and a better social order.

For centuries the world endured the tyranny of kings and autocrats who claimed divine rights. The fruits were oppression of the people, immense wealth and luxury on one hand and desperate poverty and want on the other. Then the people of many lands, testing these monarchies by their fruits, overthrew them and established republics where the people as a whole had something to say about laws and rights. In the final result, the fruits of selfish and oppressive government will be found to be accurate and inevitable.

A nation of over 100 million people tested the liquor trade after giving it a trial of centuries. It found the fruits of that trade were always political corruption, disease, crime, want, disorder. And acting on the results of the trade, it finally abolished it, and placed it under the ban of the law as a criminal trade. The saloon and brewery and distillery were not condemned by a little crowd of narrow-minded fanatics—they were condemned by their own fruits of lawlessness and social wrong to the entire community. The gold test of their own fruits sentenced them to death.

In the same manner the test of Jesus applied to war will condemn it, and it will have to pass off the map of human custom. War has been given centuries of almost unlimited opportunity to prove itself a blessing or a curse to the world, and it writes its own condemnation as the most wasteful, stupid and cruel custom of mankind. The nations are at this present moment weighing it in the balance and find it wanting as a means to an end. Its results are without excuse, and its fruits are a terrible comment on the selfishness and shortsightedness of mankind. By those fruits as tested, war will have to yield to arbitration and international friendship, and the immense wealth poured out to maintain war will be directed into channels of education and preservation of life instead of its destruction.

The gold test of Jesus can be applied to any system of philosophy or education or religion or any personal habit. The results of any habit of life may be tested safely by this test of the fruits. Suppose the young life of this generation takes liberties with sex freedom and claims to regulatelate its habits by rules that take into account nothing but the personal gratification of appetite, the results will determine the right of wrong of that habit on the person or on society. There are some laws of life that never change. They bear the same fruits whether we believe in the laws or not. They are inevitable. It makes no difference whether we act on our own selfish laws or whether we go with the crowd and do what everyone is doing, if the act or habit is contrary to the laws of purity and decency and the eternal standards of God the results will be the same in every age and every place.

The gold test of Jesus is a splendid way to determine the worthwhileness of life as a whole. It is the ultimate rule for nations and for individuals. It will always work. It may take time to find it out, and the mills of God may work slowly. But as Anne of Austria said, "God may not pay until the end of the week, but in the end He does pay."

SATISFACTION IN SERVICE

WE WERE sitting together, one evening, a group of friends, every man but two or three over 50 years old, and the conversation finally settled into intimate personal anecdote. One man in the group had been a noted journalist who had made an international reputation during the war. Another was a man of large financial dealings, known as a leading banker all over the state. A third held a place as a railroad president of a great interstate system. Another had written learned books on jurisprudence. A fifth had been a governor of one of our states, and a sixth was the editor of a great city daily.

The question was put around the circle, "What one thing in life so far has given you the greatest satisfaction? What is it that you are happiest about, as you think it over?"

The answers were interesting. They were interesting because they were all alike. Every one of these men, who had acquired wealth and honors and had been what the world calls "successful," confessed that the highest pleasure they had ever known had come from the doing of something that had brought happiness to others. The making of money, the winning of fame, the doing of business on a large scale, the applause of the multitude, had not brought to this group of more than average men the satisfaction that they had felt over some act of service to others who needed it.

As a railroad man put it: "With the news of the great flood disaster in Vermont and other New England states, I remembered my own boyhood and young manhood in the Green Mountain state, and in correspondence and by telegraph found that one of the old friends of my father had lost everything, including all his horses and cattle swept down the Winooski River. He was reduced to poverty in a night, houses, barns, livestock, the accumulation of a hard toiling life all gone. I think I have never felt a more satisfying feeling in all my life than I felt the other day when I was able to assure this old family friend who had stood by us in a trying experience, that I would see that his losses were all made good. Excuse me for narrating what might seem like a piece of cheap egotism but as I understand it we are all trying to get at the one thing that has given us the most pleasure in life. I don't find mine in building railroads, not as the main thing, anyway. I guess we are all in the same class. Making someone else happy is about the highest point we ever get in the job of real life."

Wonder if that isn't the common experience of all those who are reading this sermon? If it doesn't sound too much like preaching to my invisible audience, may I ask what do you find is the most satisfactory thing you ever did? Was it when you made a lot of money or won the applause of the multitude for some deed of physical bravery, or read the press notices of the wonderful speech you made in the town hall, or when you saw your name in the society column at the head of the list of the most notable persons present?

If we ask what was the service that Jesus rendered the world to make good His statement that He was one who served, it is not difficult to answer that question. The historian has it as a part of his record that during His public ministry Jesus went about doing good, healing the sick, recovering sight for the blind, and hearing for the deaf, and making the poor souls that were tortured by insanity to be reasoning and normal beings. If we take Mark's Gospel as an indication of Jesus' service to suffering humanity, it is almost entirely taken up with deeds of mercy for the multitude for whom Jesus had such compassion.

But of course the service that Jesus rendered the world was not confined to the few years He spent here in the flesh. He gave to the world its ideals of unselfishness, its heart throb for something greater than the love of money or of fame. He gave to a sinful world hope for forgiveness and the glad faith in immortality, which helps us all over the walk thru the Valley of the Shadow, and comforts the grief stricken heart when death comes suddenly or terribly. The world owes to this Jesus more than it ever can measure for the heritage we pass on to every generation of courage, devotion to duty, clean living in the midst of temptation, communion with a heavenly Father, faith in the final victory of right over wrong and the culmination of the end of hate and war and the reign of universal peace and the founding of the brotherhood of man.

The one thing that ought to make every person stop and think whenever these words of Jesus are remembered, is the astonishing practice of One who called Himself the Son of God. His exalted station did not make Him proud or haughty or exclusive. The act of washing His disciples' feet was more than a dramatic gesture for that one occasion. It was an illustration to last for all time that no man ever reaches such heights of fame or power that he can ever claim to be a master of others, or free himself from the terms of doing for others. The greater the power the more he must give. The higher the place he occupies the more obligation to lift up others to the place where he stands.

"Noblesse Oblige," is the old motto. "Rank confers obligation." Surely the Master has taught that for all time. He was King of kings. Yet he was among men as One who serves. What better can anyone do than follow His kingly example?

THE ABUNDANT LIFE

A MAN'S life does not consist in the abundance of things he possesses." Many people think it does. The clerk in the railroad office says to himself as he sees the general manager going down to take his special coach to New York, riding in a $3,000 car, "I wish I had a car like that! And look at the fittings of that special coach! I saw it once when I was sent to the old man with a late telegram. Gorgeous! Well, the things that man has to make him comfortable can't be bought with my salary!" And the clerk takes up his daily task of finding out where freight car number 34,789 is today, and feels unhappy because he doesn't have more "things."

Or the girl in the office downstairs, pounding a typewriter, looks out of the window and sees a richly gowned society leader going down the avenue headed for a cloak store, and envies the woman who, while already wearing a $500 fur cloak, is going to buy another, because the one she is wearing is a whole year old. But perhaps the lady with the old fur cloak needs something more than things to make her happy, if the stenographer only knew the inner history of her home life.

Jesus was not a monk or an ascetic who despised the comforts and happy necessities of life. He said once that if people would seek the Kingdom of God first, they would have all the "things" they needed for their comfort. Jesus was in hearty sympathy with the human race to have the joys that a comfortable home may possess. He had no quarrel with people who want to have good beds to sleep in, and good furniture and pictures and pianos and radios and automobiles and good food and clothes and travel. He wanted people to be happy. Indeed, the first sermon He preached call the "Sermon on the Mount," begins with the use of the word "Happy,": which the word "blessed" in the Beatitudes really means.

But while all that is true, it does not follow that the possession of any of these things in itself will insure a full life for the owner. The well known fact that those who have the largest amount of things are not the happiest people in the world goes a long way to prove that the great Teacher expressed one of the greatest facts of life when He said a man's real life does not depend on things.

What does it depend on?

It depends on the definition a man has of life. Is life, the entire life of a human being, bounded by material matter? Where does the eternal spirit come in? The spirit is greater than the body, because it has immortality and the body does not. Measured by the infinite span of everlasting things, the things that minister to the bodily appetites or even to its physical needs are pitiful compared with the feelings and passions and emotions of a human being.

So the Master Teacher would emphasize the spiritual over against the material, while not looking with contempt on the material. It is simply a question of values. What is worth more? The things that minister to the flesh or the things that minister to the mind and char-

acter of the soul? That is the meaning of Jesus' statement about the possession of "things."

Take the people in your own town. Suppose you could get all the people who live in the most expensive houses, and have them full of the most luxurious furnishings, the people who possess the greatest variety of works of art and musical instruments, and the richest and most expensive clothing and the finest and most extensive libraries, and in short, are the richest people in town—suppose you could get all those people to come out of their houses some fine day and go and sit down together in your town park, and take stock of their lives and find out how many of them were the satisfied and contented people of the place?

And then the next day you would get the people who live in the plain houses and have far fewer worldly goods, to get together in the same place and take stock of their mental attitude and of their lives? What results would you find from such a display of people in your town?

I don't mean, of course, a comparison between the desperately poor and needy folks in your town and the desperately rich, but a fair comparison between the folks who have what we call "a lot" of material things and those who don't have so much. Would all the happy, contented and satisfied people be in the first group, and all the discontented be in the other?

You know they wouldn't. Some of the most unhappy people I know in my own town live in the biggest houses and have them stuffed full of things. They live off the richest food, they sleep on the softest beds and they can travel and they have a surplus in the bank, but their lives are poor and pitiful. Things do not bring the finest satisfaction. The Master was right. It takes spiritual and moral and mental possessions to give the human race the best enjoyment and the most enduring happiness. Don't acquire the habit of envy when you see a person with a "lot" of things. It would be a terrible risk to have to change places with the people who have the most. I would not want to risk it, myself.

PERFECTION THE IDEAL

THE STANDARD set up by Jesus is the most perfect ever known in any religious program. What standard can exceed that which puts the Divine Being Himself as the character to be imitated and followed?

This looks discouraging to the average man.

But why?

Every farmer wants as perfect farm machinery as he can get. The agent for a twine binder or a combine comes around. He does not say to the farmer, "My machine is far from perfect. It is liable to break down on a rough field of wheat. The expense of repairing it is very great. It is not a perfect machine."

Does he say that?

You know that he doesn't. What does he say?

"We have the most perfect machine on the market. The roughest ground you have is playtime to our product. It is the result of years of experiment and testing. The repairs will be neglible. It is the best all-around thing on the market. There isn't anything better. It is perfect!"

That's the way that agent talks. And he isn't afraid to use the word Jesus used,—"perfect."

We don't want anything imperfect that we buy. We don't want imperfect clothes from the tailor nor imperfect cars from the automobile dealer. The nearer anything comes to perfection the better we are pleased. Indeed the whole struggle of the man who has anything to sell, from a can opener to a radio, is to make the prospective buyer believe that his particular article is nearer perfection than the goods of any other advertiser.

Why then, should any human being shrink from the thought of trying to make himself perfect, seeing he is more valuable than a combine or a can opener or a radio? And when it comes to a pattern, where is there any to compare with the Almighty who is perfect in every part of His wonderful Being?

Suppose the attempt at perfection begins with the physical. That in itself is a most interesting place to begin. No sensible human being chooses to be blind or lame or diseased. If he is normal he desires the most perfect body possible, and he trains himself for it. And there is not a healthy man or woman who doesn't admire a real athlete. What admiration for a clean, perfect young man like Lindbergh, or a wonderful tennis player like Helen Wills! They could not do the remarkable things they can do unless their physical make up were well nigh perfect. The joy of animal life for human beings depends on the approach to perfection in the bodily structure. There can be no quarrel on the part of any one for the craving for perfection in the body.

Or suppose the perfection of the mental faculties is considered. No one would choose in cold blood to have a weak or twisted or crazy mind. We all admire mental ability, and we don't get far along any road called success unless we have at least a fair amount of it. Brains count in the battle of life, and the best are coveted by all sane persons. So perfection in mental development does not seem to be absurd or foolish or to be sneered at.

But how about perfection in the spiritual and moral life of one's growth? Is it here that the average man and woman shrinks from trying to attain it, or thinks it is impossible? When we use the word or phrase, "He or she thinks he or she is perfect" we mean in terms of character. And there is more or less hesitation about claiming perfection in that direction.

But why not try for it, as we do for perfection in the other two parts of ourselves, the physical and the mental? Because it is harder? Yes, no doubt. It is harder to be a perfect man or woman morally and spiritually than to be an athlete physically or a trained brain worker. The test of character is the severest test of all for humans to meet. As the old Proverb has it: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city." In the realm of conduct mankind finds his greatest battle field, and in the place of temptation to his passions he finds more to overcome than in the school room or university before the problems for his mind.

The struggle for perfection is a struggle that calls for all the powers of a man or woman, and on that account it is well worth while. We would despise an artist who was not all the time trying to do better with his next work of art. We have little use for the architect or builder who is not striving to improve on his last plan for a structure of beauty or use. We would not call any one a true musician who did not feel nobly dissatisfied with his last production to the extent that he would dream of a finer theme the next effort he made.

Likewise, let us not cease to strive for the perfection of the highest form of growth and power, the perfection that the great Teacher was talking about when He said "be perfect like God." We are made in the image of God. Why not go about with our daily thought of that noble birth, and resolve that come what will, faint tho that image may often seeem to be, we will try to imitate it, until we reach up to something like it. Only by such effort is life truly worth while.

DO NOT BE ANXIOUS

JESUS understood what we call human nature and He taught accordingly. He knew the tendency of mankind to worry and fret. And at the close of one part of the Sermon on the Mount He dwells for some time on the habit of being anxious about the common, everyday things like food and clothing and material necessities. He tells His disciples that God cares for the birds of the field and that human beings are of much more value than animals and God will take care of them. So, He says, don't be anxious about tomorrow. Don't worry.

This does not mean that we are not to do anything to get food and clothes and necessities. But it does mean that worry and anxiety do not do any good but rather get in the way of any honest effort to provide what we need.

That seems so plain that it would seem as if everyone would act accordingly. But people in every age of the world have needed this earnest teaching of the great Teacher. Every day we read in the press accounts of some one who has ended life because he was worried over financial matters or because he was fearful of the future success of some venture. If we had the full quota of lives that have gone out prematurely on account of worry, it would reveal an enormous number who have failed to learn the lesson of the calm life.

I believe this calm life can be cultivated by any person who wants it. And the way to cultivate it is to believe first of all that if we are really the children of God, He will do everything in His power to help us in our struggles and if we are living up to the light we have and want to do His will, nothing can harm us, no matter what happens.

Starting out on that basis, one has a tremendous backing for all human effort. Suppose after I have done all I can, with the wisdom and strength I have, and I fail, and what I wanted to be success is dismal wrecking of all my hopes, still, I have a right to be at peace of mind, because I know that in some way, at some time I will get compensation, and over and above all the lack of success will be some good reason that God knows better than I do. I think I have a perfect right, in case I have that view of life, under the almighty care of an almighty power that wishes everything good for me, to be free from all worry and go to sleep in perfect peace, trusting in the Divine care and love.

But some one will say, "How about financial losses and loss of health, and the shadow of hospital expenses and operations and the failure to get that position upon which my very living depends? How can anyone help being anxious over such troubles, and worrying over them?

But without trying to answer all this, suppose we say, "All right. Worry, get anxious, lose heart, get depressed, give up. Will all that bring the money back, or restore your health, or pay the doctor or find you a position?" You know it won't. On the other hand, all that nervousness and worry will unfit you to make money, and hurry on your illness and make you less liable to make a good impression with some firm that needs a good man.

I suppose that in all history if any one ever had good reason to be anxious and worried, Jesus was that person. He had a vision of a world redeemed. He felt superhuman power, enough to raise the dead. But He knew that physical force and revolution of arms would not build His kingdom on earth. Nothing but spiritual forces working on men's hearts could do that. And the men He had chosen to carry on His teaching of this kingdom of the spirit, were so weak and incapable and cowardly that they would all forsake Him at the time of His greatest need. He had organized no society, He had written no books, He had made no money, He knew He was hated by the most powerful members of His own nationality. He anticipated His early death, altho He had spent His public ministry in doing nothing except good deeds, and He felt the full bitterness of a humanity so cruel and despicable that it was ready to spurn the hand that healed it.

Can history record any human experience more calculated to make a man lose heart, and grow depressed? Did any one ever have more excuse to say that life was a failure? Surely if any one ever had a right to worry and get anxious Jesus was that person.

But as we read the story of His life we are impressed more and more with His splendid quietness of soul. To be sure, it has been said that He knew far enough into the future to be able to foresee the victory of His cause in the end, and He looked beyond His crucifixion into eternal life. But as a matter of fact Jesus did not have the advantage over all the rest of us because He had a knowledge of heavenly forces on His side to sustain Him and prevent Him from losing heart. All of us have the same sustaining power to keep us in courage and good cheer that He had. He Himself gives the best of reasons for His calm life, in spite of the discouragements that seemed so great. One day He said, "I am not alone, for the Father is with Me." Every human being can say the same thing. I will not be anxious over any event or accident or happening in life, for I am not alone. The Divine power is with me, and He will take care of all things both in this world and in the world to come. In the words of the Quaker poet:

"I know not where his islands lift
Their fronded palms in air,
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond his love and care."

WALKING THE STRAIGHT WAY

A FEW MONTHS ago I was standing with a group of friends on the top of Mount Carmel in Palestine. If you are familiar with your Bible history, you do not need to be reminded of one of the most dramatice scenes recorded in the Book of First Kings, the eighteenth chapter. This is a most remarkable gathering up there where we stood that wintry day in February. Just about as many persons as we numbered in our party, 850, but in Elijah's time his company was made up of the prophets of Baal and of the Asherah.

If you have not read that account lately it will pay you to get your Bible and freshen your memory of a scene that always will stand out sharply as one of the most tragic events in the history of the Hebrew people.

You remember how the stern old prophet confronted the false priests who had tried to wean the people away from the true worship of Jehovah, and challenged them to prove their right to be priests by calling down fire from heaven on their sacrifice. But as we read the story over again we begin to find that the prophet also was challenging the people who were there that day clustered around that hill, looking on with awe-struck gaze at the tremendous spectacle. Elijah cried out, not to the Baal priests alone. He shouted to the people assembled, his challenge: "How long go ye limping between the two sides!" If Jehovah be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him!"

Stern and straight minded prophet of God! What wrath of single-minded rebuke lay in that shout that rang over that rocky top of old Carmel! Small use had Elijah or any other Old Testament voice of God for the attitude of any man who was not single hearted when it came to being true to one's God. No shilly shally wobbling between loyalty to one God or some other. Whatever you are, says Elijah, be one thing or the other. No "limping between the two sides." Come on now, all you hesitating souls! Make up your minds one way or the other. You cannot serve Jehovah and Baal at the same time! And the historian says the people were so smitten with this reproof that they answered the prophet never a word.

To us as we stood on that mount that afternoon the scene was repeated. And as we came away, we carried with us the memory, not only of the place and the dramatic close of the contest between the stern prophet and the false priests but also the challenge he had flung out to the assembled Hebrew people, a challenge to be repeatd several hundred years later by that other Prophet and Teacher, the Man of Galilee.

For Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount repeated exactly what Elijah said on Mount Carmel. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." Nothing but the single hearted purpose will satisfy either God or the worshiper. There can be no "limping between the two sides" if a human soul is to live a well balanced life.

The attempt to carry two creeds on both shoulders always has earned the contempt of normal men. There has been and is now such an attempt being made to divide life up into sections called secular and religious. But no man can be a good Christian on Sunday and a bad business man on Monday and fool God. No one can say the Lord's Prayer at a religious conference, and then go out and deny the brotherhood of man in a political conference. No one can preach the gospel of the Prince of Peace at a prayer meeting one day and then shout for war the next without deserving the scorn of mankind.

The challege of Elijah and of Jesus is the challenge that every generation has to meet. If you are going to be a Christian be one wholeheartedly. If you are a member of a church be an enthusiastic member. If you believe in the teaching of Jesus about the brotherhood of man, believe in it to the extent of rubbing all race hate and prejudice off the map of your heart. If you really believe in prayer and communion with the Divine, practice that belief, with all your might and get others to believe the same.

The Lord God of the Hebrews was a "jealous God." He did not want His worshipers to divide their beliefs between Him and other gods round about. He wanted the entire service of His people. The same thnig is true of the God that Jesus called Father. No separation of worship from business. No dividing of activity into convenient compartments, where the man could do questionable things in money making that he could not do in the church or in his own family circle. The same standard for human conduct in Wall Street as in the dealings between friendly, life long neighbors. The same law of action in politics as in private interchange of friends in any transaction for the mutual welfare of the state.

Isn't it about time the human race learned this lesson taught on Mount Carmel and in the Sermon on that other mount? If you are going to call yourself a Christian let it be known every day of the week. If you are a true lover of God, show it in your money making as well as in your professed creed. If you are going to be a Christian be one all the time and in every place. Don't "limp between the two sides." Walk straight on one side or the other.

THE RIGHT DEFINITION OF GOD

JESUS never argued about the existence of God. He knew Him so well that He would no more try to prove the existence of that Divine Personality than He would take time to prove the fact of the existence of the earth on which He walked. He simply took for granted the living God, and talked about Him as familiarly as He talked about the lilies of the field or the birds of the air.

This attitude of Jesus about the Divine Personality ought to be a perfect answer to all efforts to deny the existence of God, and put an end to useless attempts to prove or disprove His existence from philosophy or science. The one Person in all history who has been nearest divine in perfection is Jesus. His spiritual sense was the keenest ever known. He lived nearest to God of any human being. He was in a position to know, as authority from His own normal knowledge, of the living God to whom He talked and prayed and whom He supremely loved and obeyed as no one before or since has done.

That being understood, the next most interesting thing that we want to know is, what sort of a Being is the God that Jesus knew? What about His character? For it makes a tremendous difference with the human race whether the God Jesus knew was or is a God of one type or another. How about the character of God as Jesus knew him?

The definition of God that Jesus gave to the woman of Samaria that day when they met at Jacob's well was: "God is a Spirit. And they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

That ought to do away forever with any attempt to prove God in a a laboratory or by the findings of science. Only the spirit of man can find contact with the spirit of God. There are certain laws of this universe that are the same always. Your radio will not work unless it is in electric contact with the mysterious but real forces that are in active operation in the earth and the universe and around it. You cannot hear voices over the radio unless it is tuned in to hear the voices that will be heard only when that contact is made.

In like manner, Jesus said to the woman at the well, God must be worshiped in spirit. The right spiritual contact always will find God. Jesus would say that same thing to any human being today. Do you want to know if God exists? Tune in with the spirit that is in you, and you will find Him speaking to you. If you are made in the image of God it will not be difficult to find Him in whose image you are made.

In the same way, Jesus taught the character of God when He taught His disciples to say what has been called the Lord's Prayer, but which might be more properly called The Disciples' Prayer.

The first two words of that prayer, which perhaps is known and said by more people than any other prayer in the world, reveals Jesus' thought of the character of the Divine Being.

"Our Father." (Who art in heaven). God is the God of all mankind. There is only one God. He is the universal One. And He is a Father. Jesus used the home word just as He would use it of any occasion. A real father stands for protection, for care of his children, for love of them. The language does not lend itself to any other interpretation. It means just what it says. If God is a Father that takes for granted that He will do all in his power to see that his children have happiness and abundant life.

If we go on to analyze the Lord's Prayer in detail we find that Jesus taught that God is a Person to be reverenced, to be known as One who has a kingdom which He wants to have established on earth, that He is the one great source of life, ("Give us this day our daily bread"), that He can and does forgive, and is the guide of life to save from temptation, and that He is the one being to be reverenced and worshiped world without end.

Here then, is a Divine Being, majestic, glorious, powerful, but at the same time, a Father. Who would want a God of less power or glory? But who would be satisfied with a God who stopped with creative energy or with the cold and egotistic display for his own glory?

Jesus satisfies all our longing for the right sort of a God when in the Gospel of John we find the words, "God so loved the world."

Here is a God to worship and to love. Nothing in this world is soul satisfying unless it is filled with the attribute of love. A home is empty, no matter how filled with beautiful things, if love is not there. A church without love in its membership is a travesty. A club of business men without friendship between men is a mockery. Nations that exist without this divine attribute are simply cold-blooded war machines. The whole structure of mankind longs for this great factor in its own personal relations, in the family, in the love of wife and husband and children, the one thing that makes life worth living.

Let us thank Jesus for giving us a picture of God that is satisfying. It is a picture that always will last, because it takes in the whole world. We may rest secure in the knowledge of a Divine Being, who cares for all men, who is not a God of a select few, but of all the earth. The God of Jesus is our God. He is the Father of the entire human race for all time.

THE NARROW DOOR

CHRISTIANITY is not a narrow thing. How does it happen, then, that Jesus said to His disciples when talking to them about the way of salvation, "Enter in by the narrow door?"

The narrow door that Jesus mentions as the way of entrance into eternal life is the selection men must make of a certain course of conduct if they are going to have what Jesus meant by salvation.

What is salvation? It is the redemption of the human being from a life of sin and selfishness made over into a life of service and love of others. It is the development of all the sources of life into the perfect man in Christ Jesus. It is the complete transfer of the old man into the new man, by the putting on of the new man in Christ, whereby all things become new.

Now in order to accomplish this tremendous change in a man, Jesus says it is necessary to go in by a door that defines conduct as a thing clearly marked by selection and not by division. The broad way leads to destruction. The narrow way leads to life eternal.

Suppose a man makes his choice of a life of Christ instead of a life of self. Instantly he is entering the narrow door of a single purpose. His whole and best ambition is centered on making as full a life as possible. It is no longer a life of dissipation, but of concentration. Christ is all and in all to him. Salvation is not a matter of repeating over some phrases of a creed or joining some church, but it is a personal matter between his own soul and God. His life no longer is divided between a great number of selfish desires or passions which influence his conduct, but he is looking one way, and walking in one direction, urged on by one desire for the ultimate end.

A life of self is a destructice life, because it has no one guiding principle to govern it. A man of the world is living, trying to live, in a number of ways. No man of worldly practices is ever wholly at peace all the time. There are many times in the life of the self-centered man or woman when the call of conscience, the voice of God, the appeal of the Spirit, bring hours of unrest and remorse. The evidence of all who have broken away from a life of self to a life of service is almost universal that the torture of a divided life between the following of God and the following of the devil is the most terrible suffering ever known by a human being.

The soul that has gone in thru the narrow door has left behind this distracting experience. The choice has been made once for all, of obedience to the good will of God, and the soul is at peace. No longer does remorse or regret or vain desire trouble the man. He has one purpose now, and that is to win the love of his Father and the blessedness of a spirit that has decided to walk straight instead of crooked.

I suppose there is no life so unsatisfying as the life of choice on the side of the wide gate or door of passion and self indulgence. Dissipation is exactly what the word means—a dissipating or breaking up of

the sources of life. There is no unrest like the unrest of a soul that is walking in the wide way of destruction. The restlessness of the world of vice in the big cities is proverbial. Listen to one of these confessions of one who strayed from the narrow path because she was tired of commonplace virtue:

"I am like all those who have gone the same way. I never know any real joy. I am like a wind-tossed leaf on a dried-up lawn from which the flowers of the grass long ago withered and blew away. I lie in a constant fever of wretched envy of the good. My ambitions are never fixed on anything permanent and I live in constant terror of the future, and in an atmosphere of undying and unavailing regret. The vision of old age brigs to me the tortures of hell, and the remembrance of my early childhood leaves no smile upon my lips. I am an outcast here and anticipate nothing better in the world to come if there is any such thing. I live in fear and under the black cloud of despair. This is not life. Oh God, if there be a God, save my soul, if I have a soul."

Would any one choose in deliberate manner to take this road that leads to destruction? What if the narrow door seems to some to restrict the natural freedom of the passions and to forbid certain gratifications of the flesh? Are the pleasures of sin for a season greater than the pleasures of God for all time? The concensus of the human experience of all the ages confirms the teaching of the Master. The selective process by which a soul chooses to make salvation a thing of single-minded conduct looking towards the perfection of character is the only course that brings enduring happiness and that satisfaction which leaves the soul in the place of peace, the peace of God which passeth understanding. The testimony of all who have gone in thru the narrow door is the witness of contented life. The testimony of all who have gone down the wide road is the witness of unhappiness and despair, at last. And it is the result in the long run that counts.

IMITATING THE MASTER

A CHRISTIAN is not one who subscribes to a certain creed and joins a church. But a Christian is one who subscribes to a personal love of Christ and joins His companionship all the way along the journey of life.

It is time that this old world began to understand that Christianity is not a system of theology or an organization that follows a form of ritualistic ceremonies, or an organization that is built up around man-made creeds based on what the world has been taught about what has been said about its Founder. But the one basic thing that we need to have impressed on us is the fact that being a Christian disciple means following the life and example of Jesus Himself, and not what some school of metaphysics has taught about Him.

The life of Jesus was the most open book the world ever saw or read. He lived a simple workman's life in a village of Palestine, known and respected by His townsmen. His public career, as it is called, was lived under the everyday scruitiny of all sorts of people, many of whom were His bitter enemies. He was followed by the multitude all the time, so that to be able to get a little needed physical rest He often had to escape by boat or steal away up into the mountains or go off into the wilderness. What He was and what He taught are matters of simple history witnessed by any number of competent witnesses, whose word would be good in any modern court.

What then, is meant by "following Him?" What did He mean by it when he said it to Peter?

What Jesus meant by that command was to study His earthly life and as nearly as possible imitate it in matters of conduct. This does not mean trying to do the impossible. Jesus would not tell His disciples to do that. All He wants of any human being today is to put into life what He put into it, to interpret the real meaning of life in terms of daily conduct. What other standard have we if we do not have for a standard of conduct "What Would Jesus Do?"

If we accept that as a true standard of what it means to be a Christian, how can we tell what to do in every case in our modern world which is so far different from the world into which He was born?

But the world of humanity is just the same as it was 2,000 years ago. People are the same that they have always been. The traveler to the modern Palestine finds the old customs changing. The automobile and the tractor are pushing the camel and the donkey off the highway. The radio and the electric machine and the new hotel in Jerusalem are not like the candle and the handreaper of Jesus's time. But the people in Palestine are just like the people Jesus saw and talked to and loved. Folks remain just the same. There may be any number of outward changes of custom and living, but the inner heart of humanity beats just as it did when the first man come into being. His needs and his passions and his longings and his sins are the same always.

So, when we ask what Jesus would do in our attempt to obey His command to follow Him, it is not such a complex thing after all. What did He do in the earthly life that He had to live in His own time?

Well, He laid down certain eternal principles of daily conduct by which we might determine the details. Those principles were in brief:

Repentence for sin and a turning to God with all the heart.

Faith in God as a heavenly Father who would care for the needs of His children if they love and obey Him.

Love to God and one's neighbor. That was His main teaching. In that one sentence He packed His creed. Obedience to it would stop war and race hate, and bring in the reign of the golden age of peace.

Jesus lived a life of prayer and communion with spiritual powers.

If we really follow Him, we cannot ignore His own personal hibits of compassion for the multitude, His thought for little children, His rebuke for hypocrisy, His admiration for strong young manhood, His unrivaled dignity in the face of persecution and enmity, His astonishing faith in the ultimate victory of right over wrong.

All that, Jesus lived in His earthly life. Is it too much to expect His disciples to try to imitate all that perfection of conduct? But what shall we do to prove that we are disciples? Where shall the world look for the evidence of Christianity if not to those who profess His name? Will the world forever be content to define a Christian as a person who joins a religious society and says he believes certain statements he has been taught by a professor of theology? The very term Christian in some countries does not mean being Christlike, but simply a political bias, as in Turkey, and in other Mohammedan countries, so far has the original term as Jesus meant it been obscured and debased by the failure to follow the Jesus of history.

Away with creeds which weigh belief
In tweedledum and tweedledee;
The faith which leads a Christlike life
Means more than man-made creeds to me.

THE POWER OF PRAYER

JESUS never argued about prayer, any more than He did about the existence of God. He simply took it for granted, just as He took for granted the existence of the air he breathed, or the food He ate. Prayer was to Him a habit as common as eating or sleeping or walking.

There have been three different definitions of prayer made by different people. The first is simply asking God for something, making out of the act of prayer a constant begging habit, and feeling hurt unless the begging was met with an answer exactly as the petitioner made the request.

The second method of many people in prayer is to say over certain forms or sets of words, as if they had some magical power to change God's mind and make Him repent or do something different from what He had at first intended.

And the third practice of prayer has been the companionship with God, and communion with Him, asking Him for things when the need required, but always with the understanding that God's will may be done, knowing that His will for any one of His children is far better than a child's will for himself.

The highest form of prayer is not begging the Almighty for something, not trying to bribe Him into changing His mind, but the friendship and communion and companionship that the human will always need with the divine. That form of prayer never will cease to be the true form. Talking with God will always be the most satisfactory form of prayer that human beings can ever know.

All sorts of questions have been asked about prayer both by those who believe in it, and by those who do not. But prayer, like any other thing in life must be tested by its fruits or results. Those of the human race who have observed the habit of prayer, defining it by its highest instead of its lowest form are able to test the results better than anyone else. The discussions about prayer in some college or university class rooms are of little value by the side of the actual experiences of those men and women who have communed with God and found peace of mind and satisfaction of heart and comfort in times of trouble and loss.

Among the questions that have been asked oftenest about prayer is the question, "Are prayers answered? What is the good of asking God for something if we do not get any reply? Why should anyone who is in need of any vital thing pray for it if no one is going to hear or answer?

The answer to this question is found in the practical results of millions of praying people. In New York there is a prayer league, carried on for a half century at the Bowery Mission at 227 The Bowery. Requests from all over the world have been coming into this League from thousands of men and women, asking for prayers to be made by the Brotherhood in the Mission for almost every conceivable need. Prayers for health, for reconciliation of husband and wife, for erring children,

for religious faith, for a better understanding of God and for success in business have been answered in a very remarkable way. The story of a multitude of human cases is one of fact that cannot be denied. But the same is true of millions who in every age have put God to the test, and have found that prayer does prevail, and that prayer does accomplish practical results, coforting hearts in sorrow, strengthening minds that are being tempted and encouraging life to believe that there is a divine presence and power in the world that cares for humanity and will see to it that no injustice will be permitted to have final verdict over any soul of man.

The greatest example the world ever had of the power of prayer is seen in the example of Jesus, who was in the habit of prayer and taught the world to pray the prayer that more people pray today than any other form of petition.

What has been called The Lord's Prayer is really the Disciples' Prayer. The fact that Jesus prayed and taught the world to pray is the best possible proof of the value of prayer. And if we study the prayers of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels we will find that they contain the essence of communion with the Divine. Te talked with His Father, as a human child talks to his father. He asked for things like daily bread and forgiveness and for comfort, but always with the statement "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

As long as the human race exists on the earth it will offer prayer tc God. The human heart always will yearn for something higher and greater than itself. It will reach out for eternal and heavenly things, and it always will find peace and comfort and inspiration in the daily talk with God and walk with Him.

"I will talk with Him, and I will walk with Him,
For I need his daily care;
And my life shall be content in Him
For He knows and hears my prayer."

THE NEED OF MERCY

THE WORDS "mercy" and "merciful" have a large place in the Bible, and are repeated more than 350 times by the Old and New Testament writers. They are old words and cover many virtues, and that is the reason Jesus put them in the honored list of The Beatitudes.

There is hardly a single day in the life of anyone when he is not called on to exercise this great virtue of mercy. This is especially true in the case of the treatment of animals. The fashion parade in New York on a chilly Easter Sunday was described by one who saw it as an exhibition of the heartlessness of a certain section of wealthy society that demands the trapping and killing of certain fur bearing animals or certain feather bearing birds in order that the bodies of selfish persons may be adorned according to the dictates of fashion, or for the display of pride and riches. Some of the most beautiful and rare species of birds are almost extinct because of the cruel habit of breaking up the mating season of these creatures to secure certain feathers of a special tint or grace. The commercializing of the love chapter of birds has been a disgrace to the human race. The aigrette of the small white heron is at its most lovely period of growth at the mating season, but the cruel demand for this adornment as a head dress ornament for fashion has almost exterminated this beautiful bird, and legislation has been necessary to protect the remaining few.

One of the most common sights in some of the old lands around the Mediterranean is the sight of cruelty of beasts of burden. And one of the best and most gratifying sights in Palestine under the police control of the British constabulary is the sight of the officers stopping the drivers of the patient little donkeys in the streets or along the road to see if the hoofs of the animals are sound and free from stones or thorns, and their burdens not too heavy for their size. One of the most painful sights I can remember years ago in the Painted Desert of Arizona was the sight of some of the Indian tribes prodding the necks of their burros with thorn sticks until a running sore was produced. Within later years the government has stopped this practice and punished it severely, but it prevailed all over the desert for centuries.

The mercy that the Bible writers mention extends to the treatment of children by other people. Jesus was specially severe with those who "offended" little ones. The common care and kindness that babies need because they are not able to take care of themselves are constantly demanded of older people. Perhaps nothing is so painful as the sight of indifference or cruelty displayed towards a helpless child. I can recall many times during many travel periods of my life seeing people who were under obligation to tend to the wants of children, utterly neglect them, while paying attention to their own selfish pleasures. More than once on a train or a boat I have felt tempted to take some careless father or mother or older relative to task for cruel neglect. The quality of mercy was not in them, however, and probably a sound thrashing would not have beaten it into them. One could but wonder why the blessing and beauty and wonder of children was granted to these parents is they did not have the grace and affection to treat the gift of God with respect and reverence.

The exercise of mercy toward those who for many different reasons break the law has undergone a very great change within the last 200 years. There was a time in England less than 300 years ago when more than 120 offenses against law were punishable with death. I can remember with what mingled feelings I opened a small door in the court house at Lancaster, England, and saw the platform outside from which over 60 small boys were hanged for stealing sheep, and the records show that the thefts were in nearly every case caused by excessive poverty and hunger. Courts of justice now take account of "extenuating circumstances" and the world is beginning to understand that in many cases the criminal is to be treated as diseased instead of radically wicked. Mercy, as well as justice has come to be a part of legal proceedings, and police judges and probate officers are learning that punishment alone will never do away with wrong doing. It is well for us all to remember, when we are tempted to judge severely and condemn cruelly, the words of John Bunyan when the saw the village drunkard reeling thru the village streets—"There but for the grace of God, goes John Bunyan."

The exercise of mercy towards man and beast is a proof of the fineness and nobility of any person's character. It is not an attribute of weakness or lack of positive nature, but it is a mark of charity and reflection, as we remember how we ourselves may sometime come to the place where we will ask for mercy when we have offended. In the words of Portia in "The Merchant of Venice"

> The quality of mercy is not strained;
> It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
> Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest;
> It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.
> 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest.

A fine quality to cultivate, is mercy. Like all the virtues, it grows best in the garden of the heart.

THE NEED OF ENTHUSIASM

ONE OF THE first things the student of Jesus begins to notice is His tremendous earnestness. This is no easy going preacher or professor, trying to present an appearance of cold dignity or a calm and suave demeanor that never is vulgar enough to get excited over wrong or sin. No. This is the picture of a Man who is going around doing good. On one occasion which must have been a common event when He had spent the day in healing, His disciples said, "He is beside Himself!" Yes, the time was short, and the reapers were few. If He were going to accomplish anything vital or lasting He must work while there was day. The night was coming when no man can work. And once He said, "My Father works even until now, and I work." He was not nervous or fussy or excitable, or hysterical, but He was a person of tremendous eagerness to right wrongs, to upset the hypocrisy of the men who were emphasizing nonessentials, and to set the souls of men to walking along the road that leads to everlasting life.

Compare this quality in Jesus with some of the pitiful exhibitions we have, even in the church, of soft going morality, or faint expressions of religious convictions. Where are the fiery souls that cannot rest until justice and truth prevail in a world where there are many uneven things that need to be straightened out? About once in a hundred years a Luther, or a Savonarola or a Lincoln are born. But where are the millions who have promised to walk in the way the Master trod? Where are the brave souls who are so enthusiastic for goodness that they actually hunger and thirst for it?

I have asked a good many ministers what, in their opinion, is the one thing that more than any other, blocks the progress of Christianity today. And almost the entire number of men questioned say, "Apathy. Indifference. Lack of enthusiasm for righteousness." People go to church, they pay the salaries of the preachers, they even put up new and costly church buildings, but when it comes to personal zeal for bringing in the Kingdom of God the number of disciples who are aflame for righteousness is small. Think this out yourself. How many men and women do you know in your town or village or community who are distinguished for their enthusiastic characters? Not simple people who are good, but people who stand out for positive goodness that marks them as different from the indifferent people around them? Not very many, are there?

And yet, when we study the history of the world's progress out of darkness into light, we find it is due to the men and women who have hungered and thirsted after righteousness. Read your histories and pick out the men who have created movements for enlightenment and justice and right living, and you have a list of souls like the early apostles and Christians. One of the most significant things about the early Christians was their difference from the pagans. When a band of Christian disciples came to a town in the early years of Christian teaching the people said, "These that have turned the world upside down have come to our town!" How many people do you know of your

acquaintance who belong to that list of world disturbers? And yet, if it were not for just that sort of goodness we would not be enjoying the civilization we call ours. We are indebted every day of our lives to the positive and enthusiastic lives of all those men and women who could not bear to lead lives of common indifference in the face of world need and human want.

The story is told of Mr. Moody, the great evangelist, that one evening after one of his revival meetings he went home with a farmer friend who lived out in the country some distance from the town where the meetings were being held. The farmer's hired man was in the wagon with the farmer and Mr. Moody, and all three were sitting on the front seat of the lumber wagon. When only part way out to the farm a great rain storm began, and to have a little shelter from the beating hail and rain, Mr. Moody and his farmer friend got down from their seat up front and went behind the wagon, leaving the hired man to drive the horses.

As they walked along with heads bowed, and holding onto the tail of the wagon, Mr. Moody began to ask his friend if the hired man up front was a Christian. The farmer confessed he did not know, had never talked to him about religion. Then in a moment of shame for his indifference, being moved by the experiences of the revival meetings which had greatly touched him, the farmer said, "I believe I will go forward and sit down with him while the horses are going slow in this storm and have a talk with Jim about his soul."

"No, you won't," said Mr. Moody. "I spoke of him first."

They began to get warm over the matter and the farmer finally started to run around the end of the wagon and get up front. But as the story goes, Mr. Moody, being a large and powerful man, seized the farmer friend about the waist and lifted him up and threw him into the lumber wagon and then ran up front and climbed up to talk to the man there about his need of a Christian life.

It is no wonder that thousands of men were brought to a new life by such a man as Mr. Moody. He was one of those rare souls who hunger and thirst after righteousness. He was not one of those timid persons who are afraid to give expression to their emotions and feelings.

I think it would boost this old world along a good ways if more of us said "Amen!" and "Hallelujah!" and "Praise the Lord!" and then went to work as if what we believed was worth more than anything else in the world. It is not enough in this life simply to keep out of jail. We need to be running away from it. Not enough to think of goodness as a negative thing, but as positive as a meal of good food to a hungry man. Only when enough of such souls are here will the world go forward into a new abundant life.

PRESENT DAY SALVATION

ONE OF THE memories that remains vivid to me is the picture of an old minister, a friend of my father, who sometimes was a guest in the house, and in the morning at the hour of family worship, father would ask him to offer the prayer. I remember that he prayed long and fervently, and always ended his prayer by saying, "And, O Lord, save us at last, for Jesus' sake, Amen."

That phrase, "Save us at last," stayed with my boyish mind, and hearing it many times since from other ministers and church members, it became a sort of questioning in my mind, centering around the great word, "salvation." What did they mean by saying "and save us at last?" When people were saved, did they have to wait until they died to get the benefit of salvation? When Paul said to the jailer at Philippi when the earthquake released the prisoners, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," did he mean that the jailer was not saved there in the jail that night, but would have to wait until he died, or until some future time, known as "at last," completed the work of salvation?

Thinking the whole matter over during late years, I have come to the conclusion that the words "save us at last," belong to a wrong idea that has been entertained not only by many church members, but also by educated and ordained preachers. In their thought of redemption they have caried a sort of reservation in their minds, regarding salvation as something that goes with the process of getting finally into heaven after this earthly life has run its course.

Now, according to the words of the Lord's prayer that Jesus taught us all to pray, the kingdom of God is a thing to be set up and established firmly here on earth. It is not a thing to wait for, but something to be enjoyed right here, while we are in the flesh, and not an indefinite and future dream belonging to some existence in the spiritual world. In other words, religion is a practical and everyday thing, belonging to the life that now is, and salvation is a real and everyday thing that begins as soon as a man has accepted the terms of salvation. In other words, if I am drowning and a friend jumps in and brings me to land before I drown, I am saved. I am not "saved at last," but right there on the spot. Of course, I may have to make my salvation more comfortable and happy by getting some dry clothes and needed nourishment, and perhaps some medical attention, but the fact of being saved is an immediate matter that is true and belongs to the immediate moment, and no doubt the jailer at Philippi after Paul had gone his way, grew in Christian wisdom and grace and power as a disciple as long as he lived, but so far as the being saved is concerned, he was redeemed the minute he believed in Jesus as his saviour.

At this point we may call attention to the plain teaching of Jesus which many of His own disciples have either not understood or have misinterpreted. Nothing is clearer than the fact that Jesus came to establish a kingdom of right conduct right here on the earth. He was

not interested in some far off and dim theory or righteousness that might work in another world, but He wanted men to catch the vision of heaven on earth. The words, "Thy will be done on earth as in heaven" are a mockery unless we understand them to mean the establishment of a divine program of living while human beings are living, and not some impossible looking forward to a redeemed humanity after death had claimed the body.

It is also at this point that the Christian needs to meet the man of the world and say to him, "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." There is not one item in all of man's energy here on the earth that does not belong to the Divine. "The gold is mine, the silver is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills," saith the Lord. People in the pews sometimes say to some man who has caught this truth and is trying to preach it, "Stick to the Gospel and leave politics alone, or leave financiers alone, or leave industrial problems alone," as if this earth were made in religious and secular compartments and men could live in one and not in the other. While all the time the wonderful fact is that Jesus revealed the great purpose of His heavenly Father to take possession of all the parts of a man's life and make everything he did move to the divine will and follow the heavenly condition that exists in heaven.

Once we get this interpretation of this sentence in the Lord's Prayer, we will translate the commonplaces of earth into heavenly meaning. Politics, amusement, commerce, science, all come under the wonderful possibility of a heavenly program on earth. We lose heart when we see men spending their energies in selfish struggles to get fame and money and power, and using them all for selfish ends. But the glory of the Christian faith and practice keep shining on the mighty program of Jesus, who came to give men abundant life, and to keep us constantly at work to establish right living here and now. It is a poor sort of salvation that "saves us at last." What we want is a salvation that begins now and goes with us in our everyday work. And it is in the working out of that program that the Christian disciple will find his greatest satisfaction, and as the power of it grows on his heart and mind he will offer that well known prayer with more faith and greater meaning: "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven."

REMOVE FEAR

THE HUMAN race always has been subject to fears, which have robbed it of happiness and power. There is the fear of poverty, of disease, of failure, of old age and of death. Other fears are the fear of ridicule and of criticism. Disraeli, who became prime minister of Great Britain, and is accounted one of the great figures in British history, lived all his life a victim to the fear of ridicule, and many prominent men in national life are exceedingly sensitive to criticism and are afraid of it.

Then there is the fear of what people will say if we do something individual or different from the ordinary. And there is the fear of being misunderstood, to say nothing of the superstitious fears that have made people in all ages and in every nation subject to childish anxiety over ridiculous habits like thirteen at a table or a black cat or a broken mirror. Mention might be made of the fears of thousands of human beings whenever it thunders or lightens, or the fear of the dark, or the fears that cluster about ocean travel or anticipated accidents. It was well said by Everett Edward Hale that most people live in dread of three events, all the troubles they ever have had, all they have now, and all they expect to have.

Now to the mind of Jesus, all these fears were useless and never did any good to the person who lived in the atmosphere of them. No one who has felt fear of being struck by lightning has even been able on that account to miss being struck. The fear of poverty and disease has never had any power to ward off either condition. Which reminds us of the old lady who was terrified in a storm at sea, and cried out to the captain, "Is there any fear of the ship going down?" And the captain replied, "Plenty of fear, madam, but no danger."

You will remember the occasion in the life of Jesus when He used these words, speaking to His disciples who were out on the Sea of Galilee, in a storm, and according to the narrative, Jesus came walking on the water, over the waves, and the simple fishermen were troubled and cried out, "It is a ghost!" "And they cried out for fear." That is the vivid picture given us by the Gospel of Matthew. Then Jesus immediately said, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid."

The world of fearful men and women may well take this "good cheer" that Jesus spoke to His disciples so long ago, and apply it to themselves. Why be anxious about anything? It does not pay bills that are due, it does not cure disease, but makes it worse; it does not insure success out of failure, but makes failure more certain; it does not remove doubt, but increases it; there is nothing that fear does except to create more fear and weaken the natural resources of heart and mind.

But some one will say, "How can I help it? I just can't help being anxious and troubled and afraid when hard times come, when sudden accident and disease and loss of money face me. How can I help it?"

The remedy that Jesus proposed for the habit of fear was faith in the divine Father to look after His children. Once He said not one spar-

row falls to the ground without God's knowledge. How much more valuable are you than many sparrows? One again He said, "Fear not them who kill the body. It is the spirit that is eternal." I suppose if any one ever had cause to be anxious and entertain fear it was Jesus Himself. He faced bitter enmity, He saw His own disciples ignorant and selfish, deserting Him, the shadow of a shameful cross looming over Him, but the one thing that kept Him calm in it all was His unquestioned faith in the love of His heavenly Father, who in the end would not suffer any real harm to come to Him.

I think that constant thought will remove this nightmare from the human race. Millions all over the world live under its constant shadow. It blights their joy, it hinders their best efforts to succeed, it casts a gloom over every one else, it makes life a wail instead of an anthem. The constant thought carried daily with us in our work that with us everywhere is the Divine Presence, like the figure of the Master walking over our own stormy sea of Life will sweep this ghost out of our program of feeling, and we shall welcome His real friendship and not be afraid any more. The finest way to overcome this earthly habit of fear is to remember the fact of a good God, caring for His own children, more concerned about their welfare than the best earthly friend or lover can ever be. As the good poet Whittier says:

I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air,
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care.
"Perfect love casteth out fear."

REAL HEROES OF THE WORLD

WE ARE living in an age of hero worship. A baseball player knocks a home run with the bases filled. The papers next morning call him a hero. A young woman swimmer stays in the water continuously longer than any swimmer ever did, and she is heroine Another swims the Hellespont and gets front page notice. The winner of a golf tournament or an international tennis match is glorified, and his picture and his name are known to millions of young men who couldn't name a single great missionary or scientist. The great ambition of crowds of men and women is to do something that will give them public notice and press publicity. It seems to be an age of the craving for physical superiority, whether it is going from New York in an auto to San Francisco quicker than any one ever went, or knocking out the champion prize fighter before an audience that paid a million dollars to see it done.

I am not finding fault with people for wanting to do something great. That is a worthy ambition, and should be encouraged. But while knocking home runs is interesting, and few ball players can knock very many in a baseball season, the feat is not to be compared for value with the patient, quiet heroism of a man like Dr. Henry Head of Great Britain.

Ever hear of Dr. Head? No. Of course you have heard of Bobby Jones the golf champion and William Tilden the tennis player and Babe Ruth the home run hero. But Dr. Head? Ah, no. Who is he?

Well, Dr. Henry Head is a fellow of the Royal Society of Surgeons in London, and some time ago he cut the main artery of his good right arm and contracted nervous paralysis in order to study the process of regeneration of the nervous tissues. He had some object besides getting onto the front page. He died recently and there was a brief notice. Of course what he risked was as much as these athletes risk when they go off on automobile races to beat the record. The only difference is that this modest surgeon opened his artery to try to find out the remedy for a terrible disease.

It is one of the main reasons for the power and influence of Jesus that He came into the world to give us right definitions of great words. Who is a hero? Who is a heroine? What is greatness? What makes men and women worthy of the praise of the multitude? Now it is a splendid thing for us that a person like Jesus is the greatest figure in history, because His definitions are going to abide and His teaching about heroism and greatness is after awhile going to be accepted even by the multitude, and it will be a far better world than we know now when that comes to pass.

The definition of greatness that Jesus gives the world has at the heart of it service. "I am among you as one who serves." While on earth He went about doing good. He healed the sick, opened blind eyes, cured lepers, raised the dead. Mark's Gospel is almost nothing but accounts of the way Jesus healed sick people. The follow one an-

other with quick succession until the reader gets the impression that nearly all the time of Jesus was spent in relieving human pain. Added to that tremendous service to human need was the daily teaching, which was so far removed from the useless philosophy of the times that rough Roman soldiers who were sent to arrest Him while he was speaking went back without daring to touch Him and told their commanding officers, "We never heard any man speak like this man."

There is a great need in this age of ours that we take this definition of greatness to heart, if we are going to have a generation of young life that is worth while. How about examining your own boy or girl to find out how much they know about real greatness. Ask your daughter is she ever heard of Mary Scharlieb, the great woman surgeon who, in her 83rd year and in between wonderful operations and free work in London hospitals is writing her first novel which those who have read say will be one of the most astonishing books ever published. Never heard of her? Well, no. But how about Bebe Daniels? O yes, I know her, and Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford and a whole list of movie actors. But when it comes to service to mankind what comparison can be made between these stars in the amusement world and this quiet, modest woman who has all her active life served mankind where it needs comfort and health?

Who is your hero? Who is your heroine? Fair questions? Jesus gives us the answers. He is the greatest who does most for human need. There will come a time when the first shall be the last and the last shall be first. In the long run it will be worth more to have a place of honor in the pages of the Recording Angel than to see one's name on the front page of The Daily Universe.

JUDGE NOT

A STRANGE family had come to live in a little town, and as in most little towns, all the people began to take account of these new comers, and in short time all their doings became matter of common gossip and conversation. There was a man and his wife and two little children, and one very old man was soon known as the great grandfather. The family was uncommunicative, and questions began to arise about its history. The man apparently had no business that his neighbors could discover, and his wife seldom appeared on the street. Neither of them belonged to any church, and when one of the ministers called to make inquiry, he came away apparently much puzzled by what he had learned.

Gradually a story spread over the little town that this man was known to leave home every Saturday and spent Sunday at a city several miles away. It was nobody's business of course, but some one was inquisitive enough to follow the man to the city one Saturday and brought back a startling story about seeing the man meet a woman in an obscure street, and after going into a house there he was seen to come out and as he left he kissed the woman tenderly and went to the station to return home.

Ah! Here was food for scandal! The story grew that here was a double life. The average small town person began to resent something he could not know about the strange family. Whispers grew into indignation. The snowball of suspicion swelled into huge proportions, and before the family realized what was going on the feeling was so strong that a committee was about to be sent to the man to demand his leaving the town.

But a common sense minister had the charity to step in and he went to the man and in a brotherly spirit told him what the town was about to do.

And then the truth came out. The woman whom the man had been visiting was his widowed sister. One of her sons was in a state hospital, and another was a victim of the war, and a helpless cripple, dependent on the earnings of this man who was thought to be leading a double life, and who was quietly and without any public announcement making a frugal living by advertisement writing. The reason he gave the minister for not joining a church and for the secluded life of his wife and himself, was simply their reluctance to join an organization to which they could give nothing. In short, the gossip when reduced to the actual facts revealed a heroic struggle on the part of two worthy people who wanted to be left alone, while they spent time and energy and money for those they loved in their family circle, and who would have to be dependent on the state if they did not bear the burden of their support.

Can anything be more cruel than the snap judgments of narrow minded people who, without knowing facts, in thousands of cases have ruined reputations and wrecked the happiness of people by passing judg-

ment on them without full knowledge of the circumstances? That is why Jesus was so emphatic in making the strong statement He did. "For with what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged." He put it in another form when He said, "Why consider the mote that is in thy brother's eye while there is a beam in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam that is in thine own eye and then shalt thou see clearly to cast the mote out of thy brother's eye.

Perhaps the most common fault of American life is the superficial criticism and judgment of men in public life. Scarcely any one escapes. There is in the British Museum a file of Punch, the famous English magazine, and during our Civil War this magazine was filled with caricatures of Abraham Lincoln. I remember seeing one of these while in London one winter, which depicted Lincoln seated on a great mound of skulls of men killed during the war and the President with his long legs sprawled over the skulls was telling funny stories to his cabinet. Of course, all that misrepresentation has long since disappeared, and the true picture of Lincoln is nowhere more revered and honored than all over Great Britain. We must not forget that even the Master himself was judged by the people who did not know Him. Some said He was a glutton and a wine bibber, because he went to feasts to which He was invited. Others called Him a boon companion of questionable characters because He loved all sorts of people. Still others charged Him with breaking the law and trampling on the Sabbath, and His enemies went so far as to accuse Him of blasphemy and treason.

It is a fine habit for any of us to build up that we will not pass judgment on persons we do not know, and for that matter, that we will not judge any one as if we were appointed by the Almighty to decide on the conduct of any person and sentence him to punishment as if we had the right. It would be better to lean to the other extreme and even go as far as the old lady whose sons were talking about her while she was out of the room and one of them said, "I believe mother would say something good even about the devil." And another son said, "Let us ask her a question about the devil when she comes back into the room, and when she appeared one said, "Mother, can you say anything good about the devil?" And she said, "Well, I can say he is industrious."

Charity, patience, broadmindedness, willingness to know the best of people, slowness of speech when one is tempted to speak out harshly, all are splendid virtues. This is the teaching of Jesus. The only persons He ever judged were the Pharisees, but He knew them for what they were. If at any time we ever get the wisdom and insight that Jesus had, then we may do as He did with that class, but we had better be careful we don't belong to the class we condemn.

THE WORD OF COMMAND

THE BIGGEST word in the vocabulary of Jesus was the little word, "do." "You are my friends," He said to his disciples, "If you do the things that I have commanded." This word of two letters is at the heart of all Jesus's teaching. And it is because of the failure of organized Christianity to do all that Jesus taught that immense happiness and satisfaction have even up to the present time been denied millions of men and women; for the full happiness of human life depends on doing what Jesus taught.

Take for example his startling teaching, "Love your enemies." Suppose the Christian world had begun to do that, as organized Christianity began to spread over Europe and the world. Of course people, even in the churches, said that such a teaching could not be obeyed, that it was beyond human capacity to love an enemy. There are in the world at the present time more than 600 million human beings who call themselves Christians. If that many people had been obeying this command of Jesus and had actually done what He taught, there would have been no tragedy of a World War that killed 10 million men and crippled as many more.

Dr. Charles E. Jefferson, the famous minister of the Broadway church, New York, said recently that the Great War could not have been more ghastly and cruel if there was not a church in existence, and Gen. Tasker H. Bliss of the United States army has said that if another war comes, the church will be to blame for it. One does not need to recall the fact that while the war was on, ministers in many parishes flamed out with warlike utterances and roused their congregations with appeals to false patriotism and denunciations of every one who did not express hate for their enemies. I can recall the instance of one well know minister in a large city church, addressing an audience of Rotarians with a passionate appeal to arms, and closing his appeal with the common phrase, "To hell with the kaiser!" Whatever else such language may mean, I am sure it is not what Jesus meant when He taught us to "love our enemies."

Take another teaching of Jesus which He wanted the world to obey, and which up to the present time the world has not generally carried out as He wanted it to be. "All of you are brothers." If the world had obeyed that teaching, and had done what the teaching leads to, there could have been no ghastly war, for it is racial hate and prejudice that for the most part have caused the wars of history, and rubbed out its happiness for millions, ground to pieces between the upper and nether millstones of fear and hate. In some ways it is sadly true as H. G. Wells says, that "race prejudice is the greatest sin in the world," because it leads to so many dreadful results in the breaking down of charity and international friendship. King Albert of Belgium said the other day in a public address that the "greatest need of the world today is international friendship." But such friendship of that sort is impossible so long as men deny the brotherhood of man, and wickedly and foolishly set up barriers between ane another simply because of different

languages and nationality and location on the face of the earth. But where were the religious organizations of Europe in all the centuries of the Christian era that the hate was not driven out of men's hearts? The brotherhood of man was not taught or believed as Jesus taught it. Even His disciples have not practiced it as they ought. They have not done what He wanted them to do, and instead of reaping happiness they have reaped the sorrow and anguish that always flow out of the waters of hate and fear.

Or take that other teaching of Jesus in which he taught the oneness of religious belief, in his great longing that his disciples might be one. Instead of obeying that great teaching and doing as the Master wanted us to do, Christendom has been divided into Catholic and Protestant and over 100 different sects or denominations have arisen in America alone. The Christian world has been so radically divided over its creeds and ceremonies that at a world conference where scores of men calling themselves Christians came together in Europe to disucss the principles and teaching of the Christian life, it was found, at the end of the discussion, that the different groups were so far apart in their interpretation of creeds and rituals that it was impossible for them to sit down and partake of the Lord's Supper together, and they went back to their homes without doing so.

The happiness of millions of people in this world is waiting for obedience to the teaching of Jesus summoned up in that big little word "do." To say that we believe in Jesus and love Him and then to refuse to obey His teaching in these three great ways of "loving our enemies," practicing the "brotherhood," and uniting in "one flock, one shepherd," is to deny the very name of Christian itself. Even after all the centuries of what we call organized Christian belief, the world still waits for action. The world has been full of words. What is needs is deeds. Happiness is waiting for it. "This do, and thou shalt live."

HOW TO KNOW GOD

FROM THE beginning of man's life on this earth he has had a great longing to know God. Job says in his wonderful drama, "Oh that I knew where I might find Him!" By means of sacrifices and temples and religious offerings, all the races of men from the earliest times have reached up their hands towards a Divine Being in order that they might come into some sort of knowledge that would help them over the hard places and comfort them in trouble and assure them of immortality.

Now, there is no doubt that Jesus knew all this better than anyone else, because He Himself was so near to the Divine in daily friendship with Him. And so, He put this wonderful verse into His teaching in the Beatitudes. It was the same as if he had said:

"God is a Spirit. It is possible for men to know Him thru the works of nature. Every tree and every blade of grass speaks of God, for no human power has ever been able to create either a tree or a blade of grass. How did thy come into existence in the beginning? God alone is the answer.

"But what is the one best way to know and see God? I will tell you. There is one way that never fails. The pure in heart shall see Him. That is the way men may know and apprehend God. By the way of the pure heart."

Yes, the way to a knowledge of God is not along any outward proof of his existence, but thru the inner life. According to this teaching of Jesus, the Divine Being is not to be discovered by any laboratory or scientific process, as one would prove the existence of a chemical or of a problem in mathematics, but the finding of God and knowing Him must come from the presence in one's own character of a quality that is akin to that of God so that the current of similar things may prove to be a point of contact, just as the radio that is in tune with the voice at a distance instantly makes iself heard by the listener, who cannot hear it until the right contact is made in the instrument.

To be able to see God every day of one's life is the most tremendous experience that a human being can ever have. For centuries millions of the human race have believed that in order to win the favor of God or secure an entrance into paradise or heaven it was necessary to take long pilgrimages or endure painful self torture or long periods of fasting and self contemplation. But according to the teaching of Jesus, who was nearer in spirit to God than any Being we know, all that is necessary in order to see God and enjoy His Presence and companionship every day is to be pure of heart. No long and fearful journeys, no sacrifices, except those of a contrite heart, but only the simple but profound inner life of the individual.

This statement of Jesus opens up to the individual the adventure of making personal character, and there is nothing so dramatic and interesting as the adventure of trying to make of one's self the most perfect and well built and fully developed human being that is possible.

Suppose you knew that by educating yourself along the line of chemical knowledge you might at last learn how to change the baser metals into gold, a dream that men have had in all the ages. What more fascinating in the daily experiments in your laboratory than the thought that as you grew in a knowledge of the elements of matter you might find the secret of nature and in your retort at last see the pecious metal emerging from iron or copper of even the native ore of any earthly substance! What an exhilerating moment for the mind when such a discovery might be made!

But such a discovery may be wholly beyond the scientist's power, or if it might be possible so expensive as to be of no commercial value. But the experiment in the realm of creating within ones self such a mind or attitude towards the Divine that in time one could actually see Him and know He was real, — such an experiment is within the reach of any man or woman who will try for it. The experiment will not cost any outlay of earthly wealth. The porest person and the most lowly may have the supreme joy of seeing the Invisible. The only thing necessary according to the statement of Jesus is that the person be pure in heart.

That, of course, means, absence of all coarse and vulgar imaginations, absence of all feelings that contradict the pure will of the Divine, and the presence in the heart of all the virtues of tolerance towards others, kindness towards on's enemies, freedom from all base and corrupting practices that get between the vision of the Almighty and one's own soul.

To be pure of heart, one must pay the price in character making, but is the end not worthy of the effort? The adventure of Life is to make character. And if in the making of that character one finally sees God, it is the greatest achievement of the human soul.

LOVING THE MULTITUDE

HOW MANY persons do you know among your acquaintances or friends who have a genuine affection for the masses? Persons who are truly interested in mankind? Persons who can get enthusiastic over a race of people in such a way that they want to do something for them? Not very many, of you?

On the other hand probably every one who is reading this, knows a good many good people who are kind, honest, faithful to their wedding vows, working hard for the welfare of their homes; what we call fine citizens and useful and agreeable neighbors. They belong to church, pay their honest debts, tell the truth about their taxes and behave themselves in law abiding ways, and are worthy people. Yes, you all know a number of people like that.

But to have compassion on the multitude,—that is another matter. To men like Napoleon the masses are food for powder. To the political boss the masses are simply so many folk to manipulate for private gain. To the self-seeking office holder the masses are so many votes. To the mercenary man in business the masses are so many possible buyers of his goods. To the professional amusement provider the multitude is simply so many tickets to his advertised show. To the cold blooded autocrat the people are simply a "crowd" to be fooled or deceived for private power and glory.

It is right at this point that Jesus stands forth in marked contrast to a majority of mankind. He looked at the multitude and had compassion on them. They looked to him like sheep without a shepherd, subject to attacks by wild beasts and liable to go astray and be lost in the wilderness of life. And He yearned over them so much that the historian says that one day looking down over the city of Jerusalem He wept over it, and said, "I would have gathered you people together as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings and you wouldn't let me!" How many men do you know among all your acquaintances who have ever wept out of sheer affection for the people in it? Out of a large acquaintance I can think of only one man who might do a thing like that, at least I think he would, for he is at this moment, while I am writing this, living out in the Painted Desert, with the Navajo Indians, spending his young manhood with all his power of mind and body and heart to bring them the abundant life that Jesus himself said He had come to give the human race.

This, then, is the unusual virtue, that few people, even those who call themselves disciples of Jesus, ever attain. Indeed you will find pople who will tell you that it is impossible to love the masses, because they are not lovable or because they are stupid or vulgar or wicked or unknown. And so, men and women, living good lives, agreeable and clean hearted and right in their relations to their own kind and to friends and neighbors, are minus this great virtue of having compassion on the multitude.

But look what this virtue, applied to the world's needs, might do for the world's happiness and satisfaction.

As soon as one acquires this unusual virtue many things begin to happen. People of all races begin to get interesting, for you cannot have compassion on the crowd without getting interested in it. Then following that fact comes the removal of race hate and prejudice, which would go a long ways to remove the misunderstanding that now exists between the different races. And the absence of race feeling would put an end to war, for people who had affection for other people would not be likely to take steps to do them any harm. Compassion for the multitude would lead to an appreciation of the character in other people that is so often despised because of a lack of knowledge. One of the finest things that has come out of intelligent missionary work carried on by people who have this unusual virtue well developed, is the knowledge they gain of the good points in the other peoples' religion, and the removal of intolerance on that account.

This unusual virtue, so valuable for many reasons cannot be acquired by going to college or reading books and studying art. It can be gained only by realizing the value of people. Humanity is the most valuable of all things in the world. The needs of men, that caused Jesus to weep over the city, are the greatest in the universe. The fact of a possible brotherhood of man, which Jesus taught, is a fact that if understood would create in the heart of intelligent people a desire to gain this virtue that He possessed in such a remarkable manner. And the exercise of this virtue by good people, in addition to the splendid virtues they already have, would increase wonderfully the happiness and well being of all the earth.

After all, perhaps the most wonderful verse in the Bible is John 3-16. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." Not a select part of the world, but all of it. The multitude.

BEAR THE CROSS

WHEN Garibaldi, the great Italian patriot, was trying to gain recruits for his campaign, and urging the crowd that had gathered to come to his help, one of the young men asked, "And if we come with you what do you promise us?"

And the great Italian said, "I promise you long marches, sleepless nights, insufficient food, battles, wounds, imprisonment, and death." And then he added,—"and victory!"

Being a Christian is not a soft and easy thing. It is not an easy religion. It has a cross to bear. And on that account it is a religion worth while, for along the line of sacrifice and burden bearing the human race is marching along the way to victory.

Being a Christian in the time of Jesus meant literally physical persecution, misunderstanding, estrangement of friends and kindred, imprisonment, torture, thrown to wild beasts, and dreadful death. Read the story of the early martyrs beginning with the Apostles, nearly all of whom died on crosses or by fire or sword for their faith. Read the story of the persecutions of the Christians under the Emperor Nero if you want to understand what being a disciple of Jesus meant even in his generation.

Surely it was not an easy or safe thing then, or for several centuries, to be known as a Christian. And when Jesus said, "If any man would follow me, let him take up his cross and follow me," those who obeyed him soon found out that what the Master said was a most tremendous event in their lives, so great that it overshadowed every other event.

But we have come, after all these centuries, to a time when any one, at least in this country and in most, can be known as a Christian and there is no danger of being martyred for it, and indeed it is a title of honor, and one does not lose anything by being known as a disciple of Jesus, but in most places he gains by it.

But where then, is the cross that the modern Christian must bear if he is truly following Jesus? Has the cross passed away with the age of martyrdom? Is it not necessary for the modern Christian to bear any cross, or is being a Christian today just an ordinary and commonplace thing, costing little, and carrying with it no hardship or sacrifice?

I do not believe that when Jesus told His disciples to bear the cross it was only for those of His own time. It was for all time. All Christians must bear the cross if they would follow Him. Else there is no meaning to this thing we call Christianity. And without judging, may it not be said that the greatest weakness in Christian civilization is right at this point, that Christians have not been willing to bear the cross, and so the Kingdom of God has not grown as it should on earth.

If Christians had born the cross as they should, and had practised the love of their enemies, as Jesus taught, there would have been no war with the death of 10,000,000 strong young men. It is not an easy thing to bear such a cross as making friends of enemies, and Christendom failed at that point fourteen years ago and the tragedy occurred that stained this fair earth with blood and agony, for we must never forget that it was a war waged by nominally Christian nations. And there are 600,000,000 people on earth today who are named by the Christian name. Why were they not bearing their cross, in Europe and America and wherever they were? They failed to bear it, and the tragedy fell on guilty and innocent alike.

It is a fair question for any modern Christian to ask, "What is my cross, and am I bearing it? If not, am I really and truly a disciple of the Master, and entitled to bear His name? Am I a Christian at all if I am bearing no cross, making no sacrifices, sharing no burdens, knowing no hardships, denying myself in no particular way for the welfare of others?

Yes, it is true that being a Christian is not a soft and easy going life. If it were, it would be no better than all the other plans of life that are without unselfishness and service. The human race will not rise to higher planes of living until it learns this lesson of cross bearing. The heart of the Christian faith is here. It is impossible to think of the historical Christ without seeing the cross at the same time. It belongs to His life story, and it belongs to the story of every true Christian for all time. Lift up your cross and bear it bravely and with a song, and in time it will lift you up, until like the cross that bore the Saviour, it will draw men unto itself. For the way of the cross is the way of victory.

LAY NOT UP TREASURES

THIS TEACHING of Jesus belongs to what has been called "The hard sayings," because it cuts so squarely across the common and accepted maxims of the world.

Does he really mean by that saying that people should not try to make any money and "get on," as we teach our young people to do? Does He mean to teach that making money is wrong, or that the possibility of getting into heaven is a question with any one who acquires more than a bare living? What does He mean?

Approaching this statement of Jesus as we approach all His teaching, we certainly will not be able to accuse him of any desire to put an end to honest effort to provide for the needs of body and mind, to secure money for old age and accident and the years when production is impossible. Neither will we find in this statement any teaching against being rich, in the sense that we are not entitled to make money in honest ways, money to use for good purposes and wealth to dispose of as stewards of God's property.

But we do find that He means to teach the handicap that goes with riches, and the risk that anyone takes who makes money-making the main thing of life. The experience of the entire human race proves Jesus' teaching to be absolutely true, that riches in the hands of men who have no thought of its stewardship is a spiritually deadening thing. A man who spends his time in acquiring wealth, as his ambition, or who worships wealth as power only, is handicapped in his ability to recognize the wonder and beauty of the Kingdom of Heaven or of God. Materialism has had too great a pull over the things of the heart, and multitudes of men in every century since Christ's time have been robbed of all desire for higher things, and have missed getting into the heaven of life because of the place that money has had in their ambitions.

The early Christians started a community life in which all shared alike in their worldly gods. There was no rich and no poor. There was a common purse, and when any one joined the Christian company he put in all he had of wealth and it was the common ownership of all. But in time this plan was abandoned and each individual Christian made his own program of life, in many cases, entirely independent of the rest. This plan has been carried on by what we call Christian civilization, all these centuries, until we find that there are poor and rich in the churches side by side.

The richest man in America at one time sat in a pew downstairs, while his cook, who had a fair salary, but was not rich, sat up in the gallery. But that does not mean what it might seem to, for it is possible that the cook in moderate circumstances was nearer being in the Kingdom of Heaven than the man he cooked for. And that fact might mean more heart happiness than being the richest man. And that is what Jesus meant by saying that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God or heaven.

In one of the Gospels Jesus explains what He means by this "hard saying" by the remark, "How hardly shall they that trust in riches enter the kingdom." Ah! There you have the meaning. The possession or absence of wealth might mean little or nothing. But when a man begins to worship some material thing more that some spiritual thing, then he is handicapped, so far as entrance into the higher realm of being is concerned.

It is this dependence or trust in riches that is the danger to the money maker. The same thing might be said of any other ambition that men have. A man who puts intelligent knowledge above spiritual apprehension is in the same class as the man of money. The man who says by his life that the following of art, or the woman who says that fashion is more to be desired than a humble and contrite heart are both in the same class with the man of riches. They are both shutting themselves out of the Kingdom of Heaven by their own choices and they are handicapped by a rule of life that places worldly success above heavenly rewards.

We might then be tempted to ask the same question that the disciples of Jesus asked Him when He first made this statement about riches,—"Who then, can be saved?"

Well, the answer to the problem of having riches and at the same time getting into the kingdom of heaven seems to rest on the use that the rich man makes of his wealth. If he is a true Christian he cannot think of money as anything that belongs to him, but he is a steward of God to take money and use it for the good of mankind. Most of us who read this sermon will never have to face this problem, for few of us are in the rich class. Indeed, 90 per cent of all the wealth in America is in the hands of 2 per cent of the population. That need not worry us, but it ought to worry those who have in one way or another come into possession of God's money. It is better to gain one's life than to lose one's soul. Material riches will always be a handicap to spiritual riches. Maybe most of us ought to be thankful that we don't have to run that risk.

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